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PENNSYLVANIA MOUNTAIN STORIES

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Jesse A. Herman
31 Feb 1912.



OLE BULL'S CASTLE

From the painting by C. H. Shearer

More Pennsylvania Mountain Stories

"Ye who love a nation's legends,
Love the ballads of a people,
That like voices from afar off
Call to us to pause and listen."

—*Longfellow*

By

HENRY W. SHOEMAKER

Author of *Pennsylvania Mountain Stories*
Pennsylvania Mountain Verses, Etc.

1912

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EXPLANATORY PREFACE



MOST of the readers of "Pennsylvania Mountain Stories" and its predecessor, "Wild Life in Western Pennsylvania," were aware of the purpose and origin of the legends, but, for the benefit of the readers of this book who have not seen the earlier volumes, the author takes this opportunity for explanation. In the first place, having been born and educated in a great city, his liveliest sensations and observations were naturally aroused by visits which began at an early age to the mountains of Central Pennsylvania. As it is said that country boys make the most eager reporters for city newspapers, all the scenes being so new to them, in the same way it fell to the lot of the city-bred author to become a chronicler of Pennsylvania Mountain Legends. Realizing from the first that he was not a literary artist, and following occupations which made his visits to the mountains few and far between, he would gladly have relinquished the re-

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searches to a more worthy pen, but as none appeared and the work, when he was able to get at it, appealed to him, he decided, using the words of a distinguished writer, "To follow the furrow to the end." In his preface to "Wild Life in Western Pennsylvania," a book with a misleading title, as it related to the traditions and people and not the "wild life" which generally means animals and birds, of that region, he endeavored to explain the causes which led up to the publication of the book. When about ten years old, he began strolls through the woods with the late John Q. Dyce, a lover of nature, much on the type of Thoreau. From him he first learned the names of the trees, plants, flowers, and birds, and later it was the old naturalist's delight to recount stories of the long ago when Central Pennsylvania was being first opened to civilization. A great many of these tales he later found in the pages of J. F. Meginness's "Otzinachson" and works of similar nature. But there were others which did not appear in the "Otzinachson," Day's "Historical Collections," nor "The

History of the Five Counties." These related to the Supernatural Element of pioneer life and, from the number of them, the author began to feel that he had opened up a veritable treasure house. About the same time an aged Indian came to McElhattan, the beautiful mountain retreat where the author spent many of his boyhood days. This old man claimed that he had once lived at McElhattan, but most probably meant Nichols's Run across the river, where the Indians lingered for many years. The aged redman recounted to him the "Legend of Penn's Cave" and it made a deeper impression than any of the other stories he had heard.

From that time on new legends came to his notice, but it was some years afterwards, in 1903, when he attempted to transfer the first one, "The Legend of Penn's Cave," to paper. He enjoyed the work so much that he followed it by writing a dozen more that had been running in his mind "year in and year out." He had the collection published in a small book which was generously noticed by the press of Central Pennsylvania. Then

four years passed, during which time he heard more "mountain stories." In 1907 a number of these were brought out in a larger book entitled "P e n n s y l v a n i a Mountain Stories." It received wider newspaper notices and several editions were issued. In the preface of the earlier book and also in the later one, the author explained the nature of the contents, trying to impress the fact that they were not imaginary tales, but had a sound basis of historical fact; that all of the characters had actually existed; in short, that the stories were true up to the part where they touched upon the "supernatural," but even that to some is debatable ground. Those who read the introductions understood the meaning of the books, and as such they filled a certain place, being the first known attempt to preserve the "Folk-Lore" of Central Pennsylvania, Meginness and his contemporaries, and the Archives at Harrisburg, having about said the last word on the historical part. In these books of mountain legends, the author has endeavored to print only such stories as found no place

nor would find a place in volumes of Central Pennsylvania history. There is one exception in the present volume. In the story called "Vindication of Frederick Stump," a well-known individual is given considerable space, but here it is to present a new version of the crime for which he was blackened, and most probably unjustly, in the pages of accepted history. The late Judge D. C. Henning of Pottsville, in his magnificent tribute to the Schuylkill Valley, "Tales of the Blue Mountains," stated that the ground-work of every one of his stories could be verified in the State Archives. The author of "More Mountain Stories" has adopted a different method, going into the "by-ways" after stories which were practically forgotten or too filled with the "witch-craft element" to be included in the records of a State. At the same time, many of the characters in his stories were well known in their day, and were it not for the fact that it might give offense to their descendants through their connection with "spooks," he would have strictly adhered to their correct names. This

is especially the case with the stories which happened only a few years ago, where practically all of the chief actors are living. But one thing is certain, it shows that legends are still being created in this "empty day," especially those where shades of the departed are figuring. The great value of legends is that they give to each mountain, valley, rock, lake or waterfall mentioned a more intimate and lasting charm. "Here such and such a thing happened" is a happy supplement for "Oh, what a beautiful sight." We doubt not that Lewis's Lake would be always as popular without a legend, but with one it grows in our interest. We all know that the Scotch Highlands, the Irish Lakes, the Rhine Country and the old castles in Italy are visited annually by millions of people as much on account of the legends connected with them as for their natural attractions. Of course, with these places some of the greatest literary giants who ever lived gave their best efforts to invest them with the charm of romance. The Pennsylvania mountain country lacks this as yet, but per-

haps some of the most fascinating regions of the old world were first taken in hand by unskilled writers and later attracted the attention of the geniuses who immortalized them. The author feels positive that the Pennsylvania Mountains are a field rich in literary material that will sooner or later be "discovered." Whether this happens in the next few years or not for a quarter of a century is not material except the loss it affords to the present generation of readers. As explained above, new legends are in the making every day, so the "treasure house" can never be exhausted. The work of collecting mountain legends is most delightful, entailing as it does trips afoot, on horseback or in "livery rigs" through a country that is most varied in its scenery and at all times grandly impressive. All the types needed by novelists or short story writers have been met with,—witches, outlaws, lumbermen, sang-diggers, bar-maids, deerslayers and travelling preachers. The author has found them all equally attractive and most of them, when friendly relations were established, had some quaint

legend or anecdote to repeat. Although, as noted previously, the living characters and those characters whose descendants are anyway prominent have had to appear in the volumes of "Mountain Stories" with altered names. Yet in many instances, with regard to places and localities, the names are unchanged, so that readers desirous of taking outings into the splendid Highlands where the scenes of the stories were laid can do so without mystification. Lock Haven can be taken as a hub; follow a line in any direction and you will meet with the scenes of these stories and perhaps learn some better ones yourselves. It has been the author's effort to transcribe the stories, except for the changing of names, exactly as he heard them, but sometimes this has been at the cost of a happy or dramatic ending. There were some sources of information that were far more interesting than the information itself. We have already mentioned the late John Q. Dyce and how he cultivated our love of wandering through the mountains and forests, and the old Indian who revisited the

scenes of his youth and stopped long enough to impart a dying tradition. And there were others equally well-posted and companionable. The late Jacob Quiggle, of blessed memory, who passed away on his ninetieth birthday on October 17th, last, was a link binding the present to the past. As a boy he recalled the many visits to his father's house of the noted Indian killer, Peter Pentz, and how this huge frontiersman, with his shock of stiff red hair and big, eloquent mouth, would gather the boys about him at the fire-side on winter evenings regaling them for hours with his exploits. The late Seth Nelson was another survival of the latter pioneer days. Dying in 1902 at the age of ninety-three years, he was a day or so older than Gladstone; he had many and varied experiences in the wilderness of the Sinnemahoning. He used to say that he killed one hundred elk and a thousand deer in Southern New York State and Northern Pennsylvania, and wolves and catamounts (*Lynx canadensis*) too numerous to have counted. Jim Jacobson, that strange half-breed whose

father is said to have been one of Ole Bull's colonists on Kettle Creek, was a man worth going miles to meet. He claimed to have killed the last elk in Pennsylvania, in Potter County, in 1875, and statisticians generally acknowledge his having killed one in 1867, while Col. Roosevelt gives him the credit of slaying the "last elk" in 1869. Mrs. Anna Stabley, who died at McElhattan last year, aged seventy-seven, had spent all her spare time collecting legends and quaint anecdotes of the mountain people, her scrap books being filled with valuable facts. John H. Chatham of McElhattan, was eminently well fitted through birth and education to do his part towards the verbal preservation of the stories of the old days in which his ancestors played such a stirring part. He has loved the woods and streams with a sincere devotion and is one of the few "natives" who delighted in studying the old-time traditions. And of course there are others; the list would be a long one of those who brightened the author's hours with their marvellous reminiscences and which made him regret that he had not

been born with a more facile pen. But whether the stories last of not, few persons, he thinks, have enjoyed a more delightful youth. Perhaps if he had visited the mountains oftener the spell might have lifted and he would only have seen the stumps, fire-swept hillsides, shrunken streams, poverty and changeable weather. To him it was always and only a Glorious Land of Romance where the sun was always shining and the people were always smiling. He has tasted true happiness in the Central Pennsylvania Mountains and in this humble way strives to repay his debt of gratitude by recording the "higher and finer phases" of God's chosen region.

HENRY W. SHOEMAKER.

New York City,

December 18, '11.

WHEN THE PIGEONS FLY



ABOUT half a mile below the village of Loyalsockville, a narrow road branches off to the right from the main highway, and winds away among the hills. If you follow it, you will go past fields on the steep hillside, patches of woods, pasture lots filled with golden rod and mullein, and frequently cross bridges of loose, unsteady planks over the stream, shrunken to a mere thread, which is as winding as the lane itself. In the bottom where the creek flows, a few of the old-time buttonwoods have survived, but there are innumerable stumps of white pine, hemlock, oak and beech, which attest to the havoc of the lumbermen in this secluded hollow during the past twenty years. After several miles the road attains a level stretch of high ground, where through the recent slashings

views of the highest point of the North mountains are disclosed.

Fields of not very great width are on both sides of the road, and back of them uneven, and sadly mutilated woodlands. Several browned piles of sawdust tell of the presence in past years of the "portable" saw mills. After a quarter of a mile the woods close in to the road, but just before reaching there, a little cottage can be seen through a clump of half-dead apple trees. Across the road from this cottage, in an abandoned field, and on the edge of the woods, a very strange-looking structure is standing. Made out of poles and boughs, it is different from anything we have seen on our travels. The genial, middle-aged driver winks his shrewd, dark eyes, and points to it with his whip: "Say, that's a bough house for trapping wild pigeons; did you ever see one before?"

Its spick and span appearance led us to inquire if there could possibly be any pigeons in the neighborhood, especially since one of our party had become a member of the committee which was vainly trying to rediscover

them. "There haven't been pigeons in this county in twenty years," replied the driver, "but there is a story back of that bough house, and why it is repaired every year." He pulled his long-tailed bay horses down to a walk, and, leaning over the back of the cushioned seat of the surrey, commenced his bit of local history.

"In 1876, the year of the Philadelphia Centennial, that house we have just passed was occupied by a soldier's widow, a Mrs. Mohn. Her husband was killed at Chancellorsville. She drew a pension. Mrs. Mohn had one daughter, Clarice, said by everybody to be the prettiest girl in the Loyalsock country. She was smart, and got all the education that was being given out. August of Centennial year, she was nineteen years old, and her young friends gave her a surprise party.

"She was different in looks from most of the mountain girls, for she was a perfect blonde. She was taller than the average, very erect, and very slender. Her hair was yellow-gold, but her eyebrows and lashes were black. Her eyes, when she opened them

wide, were grayish blue, but she most always kept them half shut, so you could never know what she was thinking about. Some called her 'sleepy eye,' but she was the most wide-awake girl in the township. She had a fine complexion, and very red lips, which some thought were just a little too full. Her nose had an arch to it, but changed its mind and turned up just a trifle at the end. Although she made her own clothes, she always looked well-dressed, and her mother had planned to send her to Williamsport to make a milliner or dressmaker out of her.

"All the boys were crazy about her, but still she was popular with the girls. This was a great pigeon country, and the birds were slaughtered by the tens of thousands. By '76 they were pretty well driven out of their nesting grounds in the North mountains, but they flew north in the spring and south in the fall in flocks that actually darkened the sun. Quite a few hunters from a distance came here to enjoy the sport, especially in the fall. Some boarded in lumber

camps, but others preferred to get with private families.

“The Widow Mohn always entertained a few of these city hunters every year, but in Centennial year she was only able to get one. This fellow was from Baltimore, and if I ever heard his name, have clean forgotten it. His name wasn’t mentioned much, and the old postmaster who handled letters addressed to him, has been dead for twenty-five years. The Baltimore hunter was a good looking young chap, full of life and energy, pleasant mannered and liberal. He came up here for deer and pheasants, but an enormous flight of pigeons turned his attention to them and he said he had never had such good sport in his life.

“He fell in with two other hunters—old Abe DeTemple and his son Nick—and found board with Mrs. Mohn. In the buckwheat field across from the widow’s home was a great place for pigeons, and already an old bough house was there, but the DeTemples entirely rebuilt it. Pigeons in immense numbers were captured, and Abe and young Nick

were kept busy shipping strings of dead birds or crates of live ones to the young hunter's friends in Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York and Washington. Every day he would say he'd start tomorrow on a deer hunt, but the reappearance of pigeons would keep his attention fastened.

"Pretty soon everybody began to notice it wasn't the pigeons that interested him so much, but Clarice. She was always out at the bough house, helping him to crate the birds, was eternally cleaning his guns, and in the evenings we always saw them walking together along the road through the woods. There was an old box-swing between two shellbarks in the yard, and they were always swinging in it just before supper time. When we passed by at night we could see a light in the sitting room window, a thing that never occurred before the young hunter put in his appearance.

"The day before he left they went for a long walk in the woods and were gone all day. She went along, she 'had to do some shopping' she said, when he went to Williamsport

to take the train, and Ed. Lovett who drove them said they both seemed to feel very badly when they parted. His last words to her were: 'I'll be back again next fall, when the pigeons fly.' 'Try and make it sooner,' she called to him, as he got on the car, and then they both waved good-bye. He stood on the back platform until the station was lost to sight by the curve below the Seminary.

"We young fellows who worked on the neighboring saw mills, and all admired Clarice, could see she was considerably cast down by the parting, and tried to cheer her up as best we could. None of us succeeded very well, excepting perhaps Nick DeTemple. He had been around the 'Baltimore hunter,' as we called him, and knew his ways, and she liked to talk about him and lay plans for his visit the following autumn.

"This threw Nick with her a good deal, and some of the more jealous boys did a little talking, but every day she went to the post-office and got a letter from Baltimore, and mailed one herself. She was always in good spirits when the letters came, so we con-

cluded that Nick was only encouraged as a reminder of the absent one. But Nick was on the alert to take every advantage of his opportunity. Though he wasn't bright, and, apart from being well-built, wasn't good looking, he had a self-confidence that had no room in its composition for anything but success.

"He had saved some money and occasionally hired a horse and buggy and took the girls riding. At Christmas he bought himself a horse and a sleigh, which soon came in very handy. A protracted meeting began at a church near Warrensville, and he invited Clarice to go with him. She had been particularly moody of late, and her mother urged her to go, and become interested in the religious entertainment. She did become interested to the extent that the old postmaster said she failed to mail a letter to Baltimore for four successive days, and when she did send one off she found six of her absent admirer's letters in the box.

"She stuck them in her dress, but on the way up the hill she began to take them out and read them, one by one. Often she stopped

short and stood for a couple of minutes, as if undecided about something. The next thing the postmaster noticed was that no letters from Baltimore arrived for three days. Clarice came to the office daily and looked for them.

“Then the letters began again, but the rumor spread that Nick DeTemple and Clarice Mohn were soon to be married. She wrote every few days to Baltimore, and sometimes received daily replies, but the correspondence was never regular again. In April Nick and Clarice drove to Williamsport, and came back man and wife. On the way back they stopped at the postoffice. There were three letters for Clarice, and she borrowed a sheet of paper and envelope and wrote a letter to Baltimore.

“She seemed very happy for several months, but by the last of July she appeared pale and wretched. Nick had begun to drink again, so the neighbors declared. He had always been more or less of a ‘boozer,’ but now that he had won the prettiest girl for miles around, he seemed to want to celebrate his

triumph with repeated sprees. There was going to be an early fall, and by the first of September the maples and gum trees were tinted crimson. The nights assumed the chillness of late autumn, and the 'Hallowe'en wind' rattled the brittle corn stalks. The few remaining crickets had a note of sadness in their songs. One Saturday night Nick drove to Williamsport, never to return. He got into a row in one of the saloons along the river front, and broke a decanter of whiskey over the head of a big, hulking riverman.

"They carried him into the back room and laid him on a sofa, but he was dead before they could get medical attendance. Nick said he was sorry, and told the proprietor, whom he knew very well, he would go straight to the police and surrender himself. He was allowed to go, but whether he killed himself in some lonely spot in the mountains, or swung aboard a freight for Altoona, is still an open question. Clarice heard the news next day, and her mother said she had a hard time to keep the girl from killing herself.

"She would not stir out of the house al-

though the bright sunshine was every day deepening the tints of the leaves on the maples, gums and hickories. A few scattering flocks of wild pigeons were being observed flying to the south, and once about two weeks after the catastrophe at Williamsport, she was seen on the back porch, with her lovely white hand shading her eyes, watching the flight of the birds.

“Two or three days after this, at dusk, when few were moving on the roads, she came out and went down the hill in the direction of the postoffice. The old postmaster said she mailed a letter to Baltimore. A few days later she came in again, and looked for a letter, but none was there. She inquired nervously of the old man how often the mails were received, and then started homeward. The next morning a memorable flight of pigeons occurred, obscuring the heavens by their myriad millions.

“Bright and early, with her mother, Clarice was seen at work repairing the bough house. The nets were brought out, and hung on the porch to be aired and renovated. All

day long the impressive flight continued, and towards evening, with a light step, we had not noticed in months, she started for the postoffice. I met her on the hill, there was color in her face, and she smiled just as she did in the old days. Her face was a study when I met her again coming back, it was dark, but the stars gave enough light to see the rigid lines which seemed to have aged her ten years. The postmaster vowed she did not get a letter, but I have always doubted it.

“When I passed by the house the next afternoon I saw the doctor’s buggy at the gate. Mrs. Mohn was there talking to him, and she called to me in a hollow voice that Clarice was very sick. She had a bad fever or something; at any rate, we didn’t see her for over a month. When we did it was not the Clarice of old. It was an aged woman, literally ‘there were silver threads among the gold.’ Her face was pale, her eyes more closed than ever, her lips were no longer full, there were wrinkles where once had been the bloom of youth.

“But she was brave and went about her household duties as before. A year passed, and the grand spectacle of the wild pigeons in flight occurred again. Clarice and her mother were seen repairing the bough house and airing the nets, which gave rise to the rumor that she had received a letter. But the birds came and went, and the long winter followed, but with spring fewer pigeons were noticed flying northward.

“That fall scattering flights took place, and Clarice put the bough house in perfect order. The following year there were still fewer pigeons, and after 1881, only a few stragglers came this way. But even after 1890, when they ceased coming altogether, Clarice was true to her purpose, and repaired the bough house every autumn. She seldom went to the postoffice, except at this time, and people out of kindness hid in the brush when she passed, so as not to break in on her sorrowful thoughts. All night long a light was noticed in the sitting room window. Last spring her mother died; she was close to seventy-five years old, and we thought that

Clarice would move away, or at least let the bough house run down.

“But last fall, after the maples and gums had assumed their glowing colors, she went to work manfully and set it to rights. Even the net was carefully mended and aired, and hung for days on the wall inside the porch. Clarice looking older than ever was at the postoffice twice, and her solitary, angular figure, would have brought tears to a stone. She seems to think that the young hunter from Baltimore will come back sometime ‘when the pigeons fly,’ but his return is as improbable as the hope that we will ever see again the Passenger Pigeon, noblest and most beautiful of all the birds of America.”

II

THE LAST ELK



It was a long, but far from a tedious drive from Salamanca to the little nook in the hills where old Jim Jacobson lived. Old man Frank, who ran the leading livery in the town, with his long white beard and general manner that suggested

a Mormon prophet, put us in the hands of Bill Thorpe, a big, broad-faced Irishman, and our team was a pair of little bay mustangs, quick as lightning and always wanting to run off. The morning was beautiful, and the roads good, so we were in the Reservation before long, whirling along past the wretched huts of the Indians, which reminded us forcibly of the hovels of the peasants in Ireland. Occasionally we met the flat-faced stoical half-breeds, with their slow walk, and wooden

rigidity of hands and bodies. In a few bog ponds groups of Indians, men and children, were fishing for carp, and as the day advanced, some stalwart "braves" could be seen resting under the trees while their wives hoed garden. There was an utter absence of bird life, and not a single tree of noticeable size, as these poor survivors of the greatness of the Senecas to save themselves from going away to work destroyed everything that nature put within reach of them. Bill Thorpe seemed to feel happy in the reservation; it took him back, he said, to the days when he used to be in the West.

That was in 1880, there were still buffaloes and wild Indians in Western Kansas. Once he saw a herd of five hundred buffaloes crossing a stream. Another time he saw cowboys and Indians fighting over a herd of several hundred buffaloes; all the buffaloes were killed, but six Indians and one cowboy also fell in the encounter. There must be a few wild buffaloes in the West yet, there is such a big country for them, to range over, he continued. We reminded him that 1880 was

more than a quarter of a century in the past; it would be delightful if there were wild buffaloes; we had been West ourselves within the past few years, all was inclosed in barb-wire, and the last wild bison were killed by taxidermists in Lost Park, Colorado, about 1900. "Too bad," said Bill, "I was never able to get west of Cleveland since 1883." In the distance we could see the long white buildings of the Quaker school for Indians, at Tunesassa. Here philanthropic Philadelphia "Friends" over a century ago bought a large tract of land on the edge of the reservation, and sent teachers out to civilize and instruct the aborigines. After all these years the only appreciable result is that there are fewer Indians, disease took a stronger grip on those who took most kindly to the methods of the civilizers. All this school did was to accelerate the effort of nature to decimate the Redmen to make room for the whites. Once the school authorities had some very magnificent white pine timber on the tract, but now all was gone except one patch which stood back of the school buildings, and a port-

able sawmill, manned by sweating, dirty half-breeds, who stopped work as we passed, was sending it the way of all noble pine trees in these evil days.

Quite a bunch of the big trees were still standing, their great, slight, graceful heights, sending towards the blue heavens a hundred and fifty feet of perpendicular grandeur. A slight breeze was stirring in the feathery needles in their topmost boughs and they seemed to be whispering a prayer of farewell to the beautiful world they would soon have to quit so ignominiously. Back of the school there runs a railroad, which carries the logs from a vast body of timber land farther in the hills. These hills, at least those seen from the banks of the Allegheny river, are as bare and barren and sombre as the treeless skyline of the Nile Valley. Our way led up the same hollow through which the log road ran, but the tracks were across a little trout stream from us, which sparkled in the sunshine save where it disappeared below the great decaying logs of pine and hemlock which had been cut and thrown into

the stream to rot and symbolize man's reckless waste of the bountiful gifts of nature in America. A couple of mourning doves flew out of a hazel thicket, and we began to talk of the awful destruction of the Passenger Pigeons but a few years before. Buffaloes, timber, pigeons, soil, all have been wiped out that men might fancy they had gotten the last cent out of existence. Three miles up the hollow, we left the main road, and turned to the left into a narrower, and stonier lane. At the X road were several dilapidated shanties, but evidently inhabited. "These fellows," said Bill, "have gotten a new lease of life since this big lumbering operation started. Years ago they lived by working in the woods and hunting in Pennsylvania, but until this job opened they hadn't been away much in several years." As our time was limited we fed our horses at the roadside near a little creek, and even at that the afternoon was well advanced, and the air decidedly cool when Bill, pointing with his whip at a little red house in a hollow ahead of us, said: "There's where old Jim

Jacobson hangs out." We wanted to know how old a man he was and Bill replied, "He's old for a half-breed, about 60, maybe not that, but those fellows age quickly." When we drew near the place, we saw a weazened old man, whose pale hair was turning white, sitting on a log, breathing heavily. "That's Jim," said Thorpe. The old fellow had just cut down a large white pine which stood by the road near the far end of his garden. The old impulse was irresistible; he had at length cut down the only good-sized tree to be seen for miles. "Pretty busy for an old man," called Thorpe cheerily, as he stopped his horses in front of the aged half-breed. "Yes, sir," he smiled, "the darned old tree has been shadin' th' garden for years, and I just up and downed it." We were introduced to the old chap, Bill adding that we "had come a good many miles to meet the hunter who had killed the last elk in Pennsylvania." Jacobson seemed to like this, and he pulled his corn cob pipe out of his vest-pocket, and began to fix it for a smoke. "Put your horses in the barn 'cross th' road, an' I'll have to tell

you all about it." We all went to the barn, the old Indian following, and it was on the door step of the horse stable where we heard the story of the passing of the elk in the Keystone State. "I have killed twelve elk in Pennsylvania," the old man began.

It may have been against the law, or anyhow against popular opinion, so we didn't talk much at the time and the only ones that got into history are the last two or three that were landed. "When did you kill the first one?" we inquired. "I killed my first elk in 1863, when I was 14 years old," replied the old fellow proudly. "I was born in Pennsylvania; my father was one of the Norwegians that came to Potter county with Ole Bull, and my mother was a daughter of Sam Jimmerson, a chief of the Senecas. My full name is Samuel Jimmerson Jacobson. Around the time of the war the elks began to get real scarce, and all us hunters decided to get all we could, as they wouldn't last long. The leading people in Lock Haven, Clearfield, and Coudersport were against this killing, but there were no railroads and no game ward-

ens, so we did just as we chose, and got our elks. We always found them in swamps, and we surrounded the swamps and got as many as three and four out of some of them. I killed my next to last cow in the Flag Swamp, in Elk county, in November, 1867, and it was noticed in the papers, and caused a lot of talk, as most people in Pennsylvania, all except us hunters, thought the last elk in the state had been killed long before. I knew at the time that there were two or three survivors, and I had them marked to kill at the proper season. Smith Hunter, a raftsman, got ahead of me with a cow which hung around the headwaters of Mill Creek, in Elk county. That was in November, 1869. There was one elk left even after that. It had headquarters in the dense hardwoods south of Roulette, in Potter county. LeRoy Lyman, like myself, a half-breed Indian, and a prosperous farmer at Roulette, wanted to get the animal alive to keep as a relic, and offered a prize of \$75 if it was brought in alive. In the winter of 1871-72, I was working in a big job half-way up Youngwoman's Creek, and I

heard the offer of Lyman's, whom I knew very well. When I knocked off in the spring, I footed it over the mountains to his home, and offered to do the trick for him. He told me where the elk hung out, and I started on the trail.

“Within a day I got a sight of the elk, and it was the prettiest looking animal I ever saw. It was a bull, with full set of horns, and the prettiest hide you could imagine. It was a browner color than any I had seen before, although Pennsylvania elks were much darker than the elks in the West. I worked on all kinds of plans to trap and corner him so I could lasso him, but others out after the reward used dogs and he travelled further and further from his old hiding place. My money ran out and Lyman kept me going with cash and supplies and I camped in the woods until November. My hunt had some success, for I killed five deer, three catamounts, two wild cats and a wolf. But I didn't get the elk, and finally Lyman said he wouldn't stake me any longer.

“I had to go back to the woods, and worked all winter on the Sinnemahoning. In the spring when our logs were floated the old fever was back on me and I tramped over to see Lyman again. He said the elk was back in its old haunts among the swamp maples or elkwood (*Acer Pennsylvanicum*), which grew about the ravines below his farm. Everybody had been working cutting saw-logs that winter, so the animal had ventured back. I repeated my old games, but the elk was too slick. Pretty soon I learned he had another follower besides myself, a big brown wolf, and it was a case of which would get him first, the wolf or me.

“My first idea was to kill the wolf, but he was craftier than the elk. I chased the elk two months steadily and one morning in July I was coming back to my shack after an all night chase, when I came face to face with him. He was looking poorly, and as we eyed one another, I heard the underbrush crack, and I saw that wolf jumping to cover. He had been eyeing us both! I lost my temper, and swore I'd get the elk before the wolf, so

I aimed my gun and shot the bull through the heart. I got him to my camp, and skinned him and preserved the head. Then I went to see Lyman but he swore, and cursed, and said he would not give me one cent for a dead elk. I had wasted six months of my time and had nothing but a dead elk on my hands. Lyman would not even let me spend the night at his house; said he would have me arrested if I didn't clear out at once. I had a little money, so I joined a man selling lightning rods who carried the elk head and myself to Germania in his covered wagon. There I knew an old German named Osch, who sometimes mounted deer heads and stuffed birds. I put the head with him, and he made a fine job out of it. I got a good job in Germania that fall driving stage, and stayed there until early in 1876, when I got the idea I could get big money by exhibiting the head of the last elk killed in Pennsylvania at the Centennial exposition.

“I had old Osch box the head, and, I started by train from Lock Haven in high spirits. When I got to Philadelphia I could not find

anybody who would put me in touch with the parties at the head of the Exposition, so I hung around town until August, spending my money, with the head stored in the trunk room of my hotel. One evening I was walking along Market street, and I noticed the name "Summerson" above a liquor saloon. That name sounded familiar, as I had known a lot of boys named Summerson in the lumber woods. I went in and asked for the landlord. He was a big fellow, with a foreign accent, and he told me he was a Scotchman, no relation to my old friends up the state. He agreed to my proposition to exhibit the head of the last elk killed in Pennsylvania over his bar, and would give me the job of cleaning out the bar room. The head didn't make the hit we hoped, as most of the customers said they didn't believe it had been killed in Pennsylvania.

"I wrote to LeRoy Lyman to get a letter from him to use as a certificate, but he never replied. Towards Christmas Summerson said he would have to let me go, so I told him if he would give me a ticket to Lock Haven I

would let him keep the elk head until I could return him the money. I got a job on Fish Dam Run, and I never felt like sending the Scotchman the money to redeem that devilish elk's head. I had begun to feel sorry I killed it, and the very sight of it made me feel terribly queer." There was a pause. Bill Thorpe looked at his watch; it was half-past five. "You'd better stay for supper," said the old hunter. "I'm all by myself and I can't give you any elk meat, but if you like ham, I can fix you out with that." Supper over, we left the old half-breed at the gate, and after we said good-bye, he turned to re-enter his miserable abode, looking as forlorn and helpless as the last elk in Pennsylvania, which he had so relentlessly slain.

III

THE PASSING OF A GHOST



TOMORROW," soliloquized Fred Parmentier, a jobber in the Cross Forks region, as he sat on the crumbling rampart of Ole Bull's castle, "we will clean up that patch of timber around the boiling spring, then, except for the few trees standing

among the hardwoods on the top of the mountain, the job will be finished."

He looked over his shoulder up the steep ridge to where a body of giant white hemlocks stood huddled together, as if for mutual protection, in a narrow gully. Around them on all sides was the ruin left by the loggers and bark-peelers, the thousands of freshly felled and peeled trunks, none of which had as yet been sawed into sixteen or twelve foot lengths, the thousands of stumps cut six feet high, and likewise peeled.

The last rays of the September sun gave a flesh-pink tint to logs and stumps, and a browner and more sombre tone to the huge piles of bark ranked at regular spaces, at a distance resembling tiny huts dotting the hill-side. Logs and bark exuded a pungent and not unattractive odor. Here and there were mature hardwoods, sugar maples, beeches, birches and poplars, with trunks clean of limbs for eighty feet, surmounted with frow-sled, broken tops, wrecked by the felling of the hemlocks. Interspersed with these were younger trees, beeches and hemlocks mostly, some topless and others bent double by the recent devastation.

The jobber's gaze now rested on the valley below, to the broad public highway on the other side of Kettle Creek, where his crew of over fifty men, making a vivid picture in their gaily colored shirts of red, blue or purple were wending their way, in an irregular line to the shanties. Smoke was circling upwards from the chimneys of the kitchens, betokening that supper would soon be ready. A cow-bell was tinkling melodiously from

somewhere among the water birches by the bed of the stream. He was aroused from his musing by some one in a cheery voice calling out "Good evening, boss," and he looked down and saw one of his men, Joe Markley, climbing up the hill, over the mass of prostrate logs.

"What brings you here at supper time?" he called to him good naturedly.

"Lost my watch this afternoon," was Joe's reply. "Why haint you down there yourself?"

"Oh, I was just figuring out a few things, you know we finish tomorrow; we're putting all the crews in the hollow above the Boiling Spring, and that'll soon make an end of it."

Markley kept on climbing while he conversed with his boss, and soon had passed the ruined castle, and, crossing the "bench," was on his way up the face of the high mountain. It was a hard climb, and he was pretty well out of breath when he came to the spring, where he rested before starting his hunt for the missing watch. The timber had been cut that day to the lower edge of the spring,

but the shade of the tall hemlocks above it hung over the crystalline pool of bubbling water.

Markley picked up a tomato can and took a drink, stroked his long blonde moustache, then he pulled a couple of apples from one of his pockets, and began eating them in lieu of supper. Darkness crept on so quickly, that when he laid his head back on the moss for a moment's repose the watch was forgotten, and he was dozing. It was pitch dark when he roused himself, looking around as if surprised at his surroundings. He did not know whether to spend the night at the spring, or attempt the perilous climb down the mountain.

High on the summit back of him he could hear a fox yelping among the mature hardwoods. When it died down and became still again, he thought he heard footsteps on the moss.

Soon he saw a slender figure clad in gray approaching him, it was a young girl; he marveled how she could be here such a dark night, there must be something the matter

with his eyes. In gentle tones she spoke to him: "This is Joe Markley, I believe?"

Joe hesitated a full minute before answering, and, then said simply, "It is."

"This timber is to be cut tomorrow," she said, "it will be my last time here tonight. I wanted to see you so much."

Joe was thoroughly perplexed, especially as the visitor seemed a total stranger to him. "I don't remember you; why do you want to see me in such an infernal lonesome place?"

"Don't you remember me?" said the girl sadly, "you used to know me well. I am Hazel Trego."

"Hazel Trego," echoed Joe; "you can't be, why she was found murdered nine years ago this coming October."

"I am Hazel Trego just the same," replied the girl quietly. "At least the spiritual part of her, the part that we are taught goes to Heaven when we die."

"Then you are a ghost?" asked Joe.

"Probably that is the best name for me; I have found Heaven seemed further off since

I left the life than it did when I was teaching Sunday School at the Ox Bow.”

“Then you don’t think you’ll live forever like the Good Book tells us?” inquired Joe incredulously.

“I am afraid not; tomorrow night this time I will be a few disconnected particles of spirit, growing fainter every hour. By the next morning I shall not *be* at all. Spirits are a part of their environment. Just as there is a silver light in a forest of original white pines, a blue light in a forest of white hemlocks, a green light in a forest of red hemlocks, and when you cut the trees the light goes with them. The fragments of my personality are a part of the lights and shadows of this grove, and tomorrow you are to destroy it.

“I have the ability to transport myself considerable distances, but only where the lights and shadows of this forest fall; beyond it I am *nothing*. Quite often during the past six years since they began destroying the forest, spirits terribly frayed and uncertain would waft themselves to this Spring, which

possesses certain stimulating qualities, and gasp, and try to say a few words, before dissolving into emptiness. There was old Reugenberg, the crippled civil war veteran, who was waylaid and killed for his pension money on the hill above Germania; he drifted here after they lumbered out the grove where he died; he tried to tell me where he buried a pot of gold, but he was nothing before I could catch his syllables. And Tony Capella, the Italian camp boss, who was slain by his drunken men on a Saturday night; he came here after they cut the giant pine under which he breathed his last; he wanted to forgive an enemy in the old country, but I could not learn the name; he fell into thin air with a groan. And Leonard Murns, the highwayman of the Pike, who hanged himself in a hunter's shanty when he saw his sweetheart out walking with another man; with all his bravado *that* broke his heart—he wanted to send her a few words of love through me, but I never had a chance to transmit his message.

“Then there was Edna Stryker, that little girl who was murdered and thrown in a swamp; she was here for several nights, crying piteously, and begging that her spirit persist until she could be sure an innocent man was not punished for the crime; she was last here on a moonlight night and its rays absorbed her, so she came no more. There were others, but too faint to recognize, some had come too far, others had spent themselves in their frantic efforts to speak to every one they met on the way.

“But as I left the living world here, I am strongest here, but just the same, I cease to be even a spirit, when these beloved hemlocks fall. There are spirits that inhabit houses; they are a part of the lights and shadows of the house; they go into nothingness if it is torn down. They cannot transport themselves like a spirit of outdoors, but must confine themselves to a garret, chamber or stair.

“But even if a forest is not cut, or a house demolished, a spirit cannot survive delivering its message. The effort of speech separates the particles, it's gone. If this grove were

not to be cut tomorrow, and I talked to you this way, I would vanish anyway, but as the trees are to go, I might as well have my talk."

She paused and looked the amazed woodsman full in the face, calming him by the charm of her girlish beauty. "I hear Oscar Shandy is back," she said when she resumed.

"Oscar Shandy!" shouted Markley. "The hell you say; why he's the man who—"

"Murdered me," replied the shade of Hazel Trego.

"Why do you want to know about him, he'd be the last man on earth—"

"I would love to see him again, before I go into the void; I saw you several evenings before it was dark enough for me to materialize. I knew you were his friend; I met you the winter I taught school at Westport. I saw you break the guard and your watch fell in a cranny in the rocks; it made me very happy, because I knew you would return after it. It is now in the crevice in that rock right before you. I want you to give a message to Oscar, will you, please?"

"I sure will," replied Markley, "but where is he? I never heard of him revisiting these parts since they put that reward on his capture nine years ago."

"You will find him in Lewisburg, but you must not judge him harshly; he is not to blame, I will tell you all about it. Oscar and I kept company since I was 14 years old. He was the only man I ever cared for, and though I would have loved to have married him, he never once mentioned the subject. When I was 18 I began to teach school, and taught short terms at Westport, Keating and Sinnemahoning.

"When I went away Oscar would conceive the idea that I was receiving attention from other men, and would come to see me, and abuse me terribly, often in the presence of the families with whom I boarded. This caused talk and cost me many friends. But as friends dropped away I loved him the more, seeking to make up the deficiency of other companionship in him. He worked in the woods every summer, and once or twice rail-roaded in winter, but he never held anything

long. He had flirtations with dozens of other girls, but I loved him too much to protest, and often cried myself to sleep for fear some one would get him away from me. He would show me letters he was mailing to girls, and packets of letters he had gotten from them, but this only stimulated my adoration, as I liked to feel my lover was 'a ladies' man.'

"You recollect what a fine, big fellow he was, and what grand dark eyes and hair he had; why I openly told him he was the handsomest man in the world. In the summer after my 20th birthday I had a chance to teach a while at Oleona, the regular teacher being down with typhoid. I boarded with Mrs. Steenerson, a Norwegian widow, whose house is now used by Fred Parmentier, your boss, as the main shanty of his camp. Mrs. Steenerson had two daughters about my own age, and in every way the home was a pleasant one.

"Soon after my arrival a young man named Arthur Renninger, they called him Professor Renninger, came to visit his grandparents at the next farm. He was well educated, being

principal of a high school somewhere down country. Though he was only 26 years of age, he had graduated from a Normal School and a college, had travelled in a number of states, which made him an interesting talker. But that was all; I could never have cared for him; he wore glasses, had a long thin nose, and pale yellow hair. He wasn't my ideal in the least.

“He tried his best to be attentive to me, gave me books to read, and often joined me when I was walking back from school. He met me so often that I suspected he waited for me; he could not have been on the same road at the same hour so many times by accident. At last I told him I had a sweetheart, but it didn't seem to make any difference. He became even more attentive, as if he fancied he could ‘cut out’ as handsome a man as Oscar. His attentions became tiresome, so I was rude to him whenever I could, especially when others were present. I guess he took the hint, for he became more shy, and only saw me occasionally when he dropped in at

my boarding place to give me a new book or magazine.

“One mild October evening after supper I walked up the road to the schoolhouse to get a book I had forgotten. On the way back I saw a man’s figure coming towards me. I at once supposed it to be Professor Renninger, so I walked fast so as to shorten as much as possible the inevitable stroll with him. But mind you, the Professor was not a horrid fellow, only my love for Oscar was so intense I felt it dishonorable to be in another’s company. When I got closer I saw it wasn’t the young teacher, but a larger man, and then I made out it was none other than Oscar Shandy.

“He greeted me with a lot of swearing, for the poor fellow had been drinking. ‘You walked fast to meet your lover, that—?’ I tried to protest in as loud tones as I could muster that I had no lover other than my Oscar, and fibbed by saying that I walked faster so as to be with him. I did not want him to know I ever thought of the teacher. But he would not believe me, and went on to

say how he knew everthing about my meeting the fellow on the road, his visits to my boarding place, and so on.

“I continued to deny, and went so far as to ridicule the personal appearance of poor Arthur Renninger. ‘Why, he wears glasses,’ I protested. But Oscar’s angry passions were growing more uncontrollable every minute. Finally with a volley of oaths he seized me by the throat, and choked me until I knew no more. Later I sort of half regained consciousness, and recognized that I was in my lover’s arms, and that he was carrying me up the mountain. I felt so happy to be in his arms I made no effort to speak.

“It was a long climb, but not hard like the one you had this evening, for then the mountains were covered with white hemlocks, and free of all underbrush. About twenty feet below this spring you can see that lot of long, flat rocks. He laid me on one of them, and began to lift some of the others. After he had made a sort of excavation he picked me up again, and laid me in it. He stooped over and placed his large hand, which was very cold,

on my heart. I was dimly conscious even though my heart must have ceased beating—my spirit was disentangling itself from the bodily shell.

“No doubt he was satisfied I was dead, for he rolled a number of the large flat stones on top of me, and I seemed to hear his footsteps as he climbed the mountain and disappeared over the summit. All at once I felt myself enveloped in a blaze of blinding white light—I was part of the air, but not of it—I could see the rudely made grave where my poor body rested.

“When daylight came I was still among the trees around the Boiling Spring, but felt myself fainter and weaker. As night fell, I grew stronger, and could move from place to place; I was mistress of my soul’s progress. I could distinguish time by daylight and dark. I seemed to have more volition than when alive. I brought myself to the edge of the public road, determined to leave the lonesome mountain, but the different lights and shadows of the roadway and the sky above diluted my spiritual essence, and to save my-

self from annihilation I hurried back to the cool, vivifying atmosphere of the spring. In a few days a band of searchers discovered my remains, and carried it away. How they found out I was stowed away in that out of the way spot, I know not—some of the men wept, as they were carrying the remains down the hill. For a long, long stretch I never saw a living thing around the spring except the wild animals and birds. I once saw a great tawney panther with his breast torn off by buckshot, drinking here, and groaning with agony he crawled away to die. Deer often drank here, and wildcats played their comical games among the flat rocks. I saw one once pounce on a wild pigeon as it was drinking; its mate flew away. These were the only wild pigeons that came here during my stay.

“Owls, foxes and porcupines came about in abundance, and occasionally a pine marten or a fisher fox. Two wolverenes fought to the death on the brink of the spring, and their bodies rotted away on the scene of their awful struggle. Occasionally hunters stopped

to drink the fine water, but none came here in the dark, when I had the power to make myself known.

“You came here at the right time. What is more, you are a reliable person, and if Providence does exist, you were surely sent here to bear my message to my beloved Oscar. I heard of his return to these parts by listening to a party of six hunters talking while they ate their lunch at the spring. It was during the deer season last November. They had been drinking whiskey freely, and said things that were best kept to themselves. One of them, more inebriated than the rest, remarked that he had been to Lewisburg the week previous, and had met the fugitive murderer, Oscar Shandy, who was back and working as night man in a livery in the alley at the rear of the Commercial hotel. All the party said he had a lot of nerve to return, with the big rewards still in force, but the informant added that he had grown a mustache and kept his curly hair cropped close as a disguise.

“ ‘Still he’s the same old Oscar we used to know,’ he went on, ‘having a gay time with all the waitresses at the hotel, and going on sprees every Saturday night.’ Although at the end of their conversation on the subject, the hunters agreed to tell no one of Oscar’s return, I feared them because they were drinking men. I hoped they would remain until dark, so I could materialize and send him a message, but alas, about 4 o’clock they gathered together their rifles and traps, and made off. My fears grew greater and greater, especially when I saw the forest being destroyed, for I knew I must go with it. But you have come in time to take my message—*tell Oscar to be careful and not let them catch him, and tell him that I love him more than ever.*”

This last sentence was uttered clearer and more distinctly than anything she had yet said. With the final word she faded from sight, blending and combining with a ray of golden sunlight from the early dawn which sparkled on the ever-changing surface of the Boiling Spring.

IV.

THE STORY OF LEWIS'S LAKE



HE scenic beauties of Lewis's Lake, re-named Eaglesmere, are too generally known to need further description. This wonderful body of water spread out on the summit of a mountain twenty-two hundred feet above sea level, has at-

tracted visitors from all parts of the country. Costly hotels and summer cottages line its banks, interspersed among patches of the original hemlock forest, making it in every respect the most unique and attractive resort in Central Pennsylvania.

Like most of the interesting spots in the mountains, it has its legend. The legend is an old one, in fact one of the very oldest that have been handed down from the earliest inhabitants of this mystic region. It goes back to a period a thousand years ago,

when parts of Europe were as wild and full of superstitions as the land of the Redmen across the sea. Those competent to judge state that the bottom of Lewis's Lake has never been sounded, and the old term "bottomless" applies to it as well as it did anywhere. This gives a sort of scientific confirmation to the tale, providing, so to speak, a basis of faith, to those who want to believe it.

Every Indian in the West Branch Valley and its tributaries knew the legend, but it was equally familiar to the aborigines along the Allegheny or by the shores of Chesapeake Bay. It was a strange circumstance that no matter where the story was told, it was always the same, even to the smallest detail. What is now Lewis's Lake, so the Indian story ran, was once a great open chasm, in the depths of which was an entrance to the Underworld, or realm of spirits. If in the flesh an Indian had left undone an important work, or had wronged his tribe or an individual, at death his shade was

halted at the "Gate to the Unseen," and sent back to do penance.

It was always with a feeling of doubt that spirits descended the long flights of steps at dusk; few were wise enough to determine if they would be allowed to enter in peace, or be ordered back to jibber and flit and beg forgiveness of their enemies. Only those admitted through the sacred portals were happy, but even that was supposition, for no spirit that had entered ever returned to describe the Paradise.

No living being was allowed to explore the abyss, which was guarded by a force of six hundred armed high priests, Indians of the highest integrity and honor. The Indian kings were hereditary guardians - in - chief, and so deeply they felt their responsibilities, that they had followed the divine injunction to "keep out," at least as far as tradition could be followed into the shadowy past.

At the time of this story, the king of the combined tribes of Indians in what is now Pennsylvania was old Peaceful Valley, whose reign lasted the unusual period of sixty-three

years. On the tenth year of his reign he had conquered his last enemies, so that during the greater part of his sway his authority had been undisputed. He was of a devoutly religious nature, many miracles having occurred while he conducted sacrificial services at the Gateway to the Underworld. At length, "full of years and honors," his infirmities overcame him and at the ripe age of ninety-seven years he passed away.

His funeral, the greatest ever recorded in Indian history, lasted ninety-seven days. The priests who were specially gifted with the power of seeing spirits of the dead descend into the abyss declared that when Peaceful Valley's shade reached the portals it was greeted by a troop of angels wearing crowns, denoting kingly rank, and said to be an unprecedented honor. His eldest son, who was to inherit the throne, was named Stormy Torrent. Seven feet tall, loud, and disagreeable, he was the complete antithesis of his lamented father in disposition. Perhaps, having waited so long to inherit the power, his nature had become soured. Toward the

latter part of the ninety-seven day funeral he went off on a hunting expedition, explaining that the pomp and pageantry tired him.

When a great event took place, it lasted the number of days that would correspond in years to the age of the chief participant, consequently Stormy Torrent, aged forty-six, was to have a forty-six day coronation. He did not miss a moment of it, and it was a sumptuous affair, exceeding in cost and labor any coronation held previously, so swore the servile historians of the court. The new king enjoyed the ceremonies, and became so intoxicated by the songs, hymns, poems, and addresses in his honor, to say nothing of the human sacrifices, that he imagined himself to be the greatest and most exalted human being that had ever walked the earth.

After the grand events were ended, and life settled into its ordinary routine he began to suffer horribly from discontent and ennui. He wanted to do something "new" every day, taxing his advisors and attendants to the utmost in furnishing sensations. If he had been a warrior he might have started puni-

tive expeditions against some tribes who resented paying the enormous tribute levied towards the expenses of the coronation, but he was indifferent to all forms of fighting.

As he liked human sacrifices and the torturing of criminals, it was adopted on a large scale, and friendless or infirm Indians were tempted to commit crimes in order that they might be seized and roasted alive or cut to pieces for the kingly edification. He did not like the ordinary forms of hunting, only animal drives, where thousands of beasts met death at one time. His huntsmen were kept busy night and day collecting the poor beasts in corrals for the purpose. He must needs have a fresh wife every week and the discarded ones were killed so that a woman who had been loved by the king could not become the wife of one of his inferiors.

A month after the coronation he was on the point of going crazy for the want of "something new." Half of his ministers had committed suicide after having exhausted their stock of suggestions for his diversion. One night while he was tossing on his couch, rest-

less and unhappy, an idea came to him, which made him jump to his feet and dance with savage glee. He would do what no other human being had dared; he would descend into the Underworld, see what it was like, converse with the shades of his illustrious ancestors, and then come out again, steeped in divine wisdom.

He called his advisors around him, ordering that all of his tribe able to travel should start immediately in different directions and bring every Indian within a radius of four hundred miles to the north of the abyss, to watch his majestic descent into the Spirit Land. The tribesmen went away in happy frame of mind, as they knew the farther they separated themselves from the vain-glorious despot the safer their lives; some pretended to lose themselves in the trackless forests, and never came back.

The inhabitants of the domain were given the space of two moons to assemble. Indians being naturally restless and curious, it was not difficult to gather them by the thousands around the entrance to the "unknown world."

Many of them had never had a look at the new king, and this was a fine opportunity to see him at his best when he was scorning tradition and showing himself the equal of the rulers of the land of shades.

The morning appointed for the great performance dawned bright and clear. Stormy Torrent, when he peered through the flaps of the royal tepee, was amazed at the vast concourse of spectators. He turned to his minister of state and remarked that he had not dreamed he held sway over so many souls. When a loud beating of drums announced the time had come for the mighty ruler to sally forth, there was an hour's delay before he appeared. If the truth were known Stormy Torrent was suffering from a bad case of stage-fright.

Like a pampered grand opera star he refused to "go on" unless some added inducement was given. When, for the fiftieth time he peeped out of his tent, his eyes rested on the slender form of an Indian princess from the shores of Lake Erie who was strolling past. She was Laurel-Eyes, the beautiful

daughter of an old chieftain named Purple Boneset. Stormy Torrent gazed at her with longing glances, and then called to his minister of state. "Bring that beautiful princess to me at once," he commanded, and the aged minister did his bidding to the letter.

Returning with the reluctant maiden, who was followed by her perplexed father and brothers, the minister was told to array her in costly garments so she could accompany Stormy Torrent on his mission to the Underworld. Perhaps her father and brothers disliked the idea, but they were at length consoled by the appearance of the mighty ruler, followed by the graceful figure of the Princess Laurel-Eyes. The couple presented a striking picture, and were loudly and loyally cheered. Stormy Torrent wore a trailing robe spangled with silver and gold, while his head-dress was of eagle feathers, dyed many colors. The Indian maiden was similarly attired except that instead of the eagle feathers she wore a head-dress of dove's wings.

As they neared the entrance, the priestly class began a song of praise, being joined in the choruses by the entire multitude. Thus far it looked as if the affair was to be a complete success, and as the pair descended the long flights of steps they were pelted with thousands of flowers. But on the moment they disappeared from view the heavens darkened, and were racked with terrifying peals of thunder and flashes of lightning. These were followed by the most awful downpour of rain that had ever occurred in the memory of the oldest squaw.

The solemnity of the occasion was forgotten, and everyone from high priests to chained captives ran pell mell to cover. Hundreds of women, children and old persons were trampled to death in the mad rush. Class distinctions were abandoned, the most aristocratic princesses hiding their heads under the blankets of burly slaves. Many fell over the edges of the chasm, and took an involuntary "header" to the land of ghosts.

The turbulent downpour seemed to concentrate itself on the "great opening," pour-

ing from above and draining in from the surrounding hills. The abyss began rapidly filling with water, which rose higher and higher, until it presented the appearance of a vast lake.

Some of the shrewdest priests had climbed to the tops of trees, expecting to witness a miracle, an apotheosis of Stormy Torrent emerging unharmed from the seething, churning, frothy depths. But the day of miracles had passed. When the depression was full to the brink, the storm ceased as suddenly as it had commenced.

With the cessation came not the slightest trace of the missing king or his fair attendant. The priests prayed and chanted, and went through their mystic dances; a thousand infants were offered as sacrifices, but Stormy Torrent had vanished as completely as if he had never existed.

During the night the great crowds of Indians began moving off to their homes. A new day brought rich sunshine, and a cloudless sky, which looked down on the waters of a beautiful, tranquil lake, clear as crystal

and inscrutable as the mystery of life itself.

Centuries have passed, but it has never receded nor grown less.

But the Indians never quite became accustomed to its presence, and ascribed to it many supernatural qualities. When storms arose, they said, out towards the center, the waters always surged and boiled and leaped upwards like a geyser, and from the foam could be seen the face and outstretched arms of a beautiful maiden.

Sometimes if the wind died down for an instant, a voice calling for help could be heard, but would be lost again in the wailing of the tempest. Sometimes young braves, with a spirit of the sheerest hardihood, would venture out in their canoes to try and rescue the unfortunate derelict, but they were always swamped and drowned before reaching their goal.

When the Indians were driven to the north, and white settlers pitched their camps on the shores of Lewis's Lake, they also were lured into peril and death by the entreaties of this unhappy siren. Two young French-

men were drowned about 1760, leaving their helpless widows and children in the awful wilderness.

After their fate the story spread, and now no one bothers to notice the struggling figure when the storms agitate the center of the lake. It does seem as if some day the beautiful Laurel-Eyes will be freed, as her part in the forbidden visit to the Underworld was not of her own choosing. But as for Stormy Torrent, in durance vile, in tortures hideous, he is probably doing penance now, in the inmost recesses of the earth, a being who dared to penetrate into the realms reserved only for the happy shades of the departed.

V

THE LAST PACK



ES," said old Sam Emery, "those are genuine wolf skins, all right," and he brought his foot down heavily on one of them to emphasize his words. We had been admiring four foot-rugs made of these brown, bushy hides, which were quite a curiosity in Pennsylvania. "I value them next to my wife and family," he went on, "because I killed them myself. They belonged to the last pack of wolves in this state."

We were indeed surprised to hear this information, as we had long wanted to see a Pennsylvania wolf hide, so as to be satisfied as to the variety of wolf which formerly inhabited our forests. Instead of a solemn wait for dinner at the lonely little house where we had stopped, having missed our road and

gotten into White Deer Valley instead of Sugar Valley, we were to be treated meanwhile to some information for which we had been searching for several years.

It is in the most out-of-the-way corners where we learn the most precious facts, and anyone who does not travel will find the solution of even some of the simplest problems interminable. All can be made easier by abiding by the principle of "luck in travel."

"It was before your time," continued old Emery, "but the papers all had accounts of how a party of us raftsmen wiped out a pack of twenty hungry wolves. Nobody thought anything of it thirty years ago, as all kinds of fierce adventures were being reported from the wild regions in the central part of the state. Now, if a man kills a good-sized bear he gets a column and his picture in the *North American*.

"When we killed twenty wolves we got a few lines in the country papers, and not one Philadelphia paper copied it. I can show you the notices now, if you want to see them," and the old man went to the shelf beside

the clock, and took down a much-used cook book. Pasted in the back were several clippings from poorly printed newspapers, yellow with age, telling in a few brief lines how a party of raftsmen had been attacked by wolves, but had succeeded in killing all of them.

That was about all, although the incident deserved to have been prominently featured.

"Those are pretty short notices," I said, as I handed back the book. "Won't you tell the entire story?"

"Dinner won't be ready for fifteen minutes yet, and I'll try to give it to you the best I can, before you are called by the *woman*."

After putting some more wood in the stove, for it was a raw, overcast October day, he took his place in his chair and began his interesting narrative. "There were six of us on a raft coming from Clearfield early in April, 1879; the weather was bitter cold, and there was snow on all the mountains. Our raft had been poorly built, and after we left Williamsport it seemed to be loosening all over. A short way above Muncy, as the

water was running high, we got pretty uneasy.

“We pushed in and tied in a snug little eddy at the foot of the big Bald Eagle mountain. That was a pretty wild country in those days, but even within the past twenty years the engineers on the railroad which runs along the foot of the mountain, often saw deer on the track, and one evening a big buck jumped the bank into the river to the amazement of all the passengers of the west-bound mail. The Bald Eagle mountains come to an end at this point, and back in them all kinds of animals were found.

“The wolves made their last stand there, and in the Seven mountains just west of them. There are a few stray ones to this day, but the packs are gone forever. There had been some terribly cold weather in 1878 and 1879, and lots of snow, which made the wolves which lived in these mountains very desperate.

“Formerly old settlers said this pack numbered several hundred, but they were trapped out and died off until when we met them they

had less than two dozen. The night we tied up in the eddy was more like January than April; there was a cold wind and sleet fell most of the time. We were eating supper about seven o'clock in the evening; it was dark, when we first heard the wolves bark.

“Some said they were dogs running deer, but we were too old hunters for that, and it wasn't long before we all were saying ‘wolves.’ By the time supper was over the barking became so loud that it seemed as if the animals were in the thick woods just above the railroad track. We thought when the east-bound train came by it would scare them off, but it had no such effect, they were only louder than ever.

“There were no houses for half a mile above or below where we were moored; even on the opposite bank it was bare and cheerless. I had a shot-gun which I used to kill birds on the river, and all of us carried revolvers, so we felt certain if we were attacked we could come out victorious. Ira Sloppy, who was a great wolf hunter, said he never

heard of wolves attacking men, but they would always fight if cornered.

Just as the noise was at its worst, we heard the 'dip, dip,' of the paddles of a dug-out coming near us in the darkness. Someone had evidently seen our light and was going to find out our connection with the ugly yelping on the hills, we thought. The boat pushed alongside and a tall, lean Yankee, carrying a rifle, got out, and introduced himself as Hiram Atwood.

"'Boys, oh, boys,' he said, 'do you know there is a pack of wolves on the bank above you? It is the first I've heard here in seven years, and I calculated if you hadn't the spunk to go after 'em, I would.' I spoke up and said, 'as long as they weren't bothering us, we felt it was best to let them alone.'

"Then the Yankee went to his boat and released a small, hound-like dog which he had tied to the seat, and lifted it up the steep bank to the railroad track. He came down in a few minutes and told us to load our arms and stand in line to await developments.

"All of a sudden the noise became louder

than ever, like hell let loose, and in half a minute that little hound was back on the raft, shivering at her master's feet. In another half minute we could see the green eyes of the wolves, like tail lights on a caboose, coming across the tracks and down the bank. Oh, but they were big fellows, you can see how they looked from these rugs.

"Just as the leader of the pack reached the first log of the raft Atwood had him down with a bullet between the eyes, and each of us selected a victim and brought him down. Some of the tailenders stopped short, half way and Atwood brought them to earth easily. Four or five which were hit, turned and made across the tracks into the trees.

"When the excitement was over we went after our pelts, and we found we had killed eighteen. Some of them were very thin, but all had good, thick hair. We spent the night skinning and dressing the hides, and threw the nasty carcasses into the river.

"Atwood said that every wolf he hit was a dead one, and suggested we go out in the woods next morning and find the ones that

got off. We found one dead wolf near the top of the mountain, and on the way back the dog chased out one that was wounded from behind a big burnt stump, which stood above a spring near the railroad. Atwood finished him with the butt of his rifle. So we got twenty out of a possible twenty-two or three.

“Atwood did most of the killing, but he only took a dozen hides as his share, and let us have eight to divide among ourselves. We left them all with him, however, to collect the bounties. When we got back from our trip I stopped off at Muncy and walked out to his place, and collected our share of the hides. Two had fallen to my share, but later I bought two more from a couple of the boys, and I’m mighty glad I did.

“The rest mistreated theirs, used them to cover the seats of wagon boxes, and they soon came to nothing from outdoor use in all kinds of weather. I had mine made into these rugs, where they will be always useful and remind me of that devilish night in the eddy. But, as I told you before, there are still some

wolves in these parts. I saw one myself in Penn's Valley last spring.

"It gave me a look, and must have recognized me as one of the boys that wiped out his family tree, for he dropped his tail between his legs and made for the brush like a whitehead." As he said this the kitchen door opened and his "old woman" came in and announced that dinner was ready. The clock said "half-past four," which meant that we would have a twenty mile drive before us, mostly after dark, through what was once the great wolf country. "Oh, how I wish the wolves could be met with again," I whispered as a substitute for saying grace!

VI.

STORY OF THE SULPHUR SPRING



THE Gipsy caravan, with its wagons painted green and white, and with green tassels and jingling bells on the horses, halted on the road opposite the Sulphur Spring. Bill Stanley, the hefty chieftain, had gotten out, and was offering a tinful of the water to the women of the party. "This would have been a royal place to camp," he remarked, after everyone had refused the odoriferous refreshment, "if only the water was different."

Old Aaron Swartwout, veteran of the Mexican and Civil Wars, who had followed the Gipsies in his broken down buggy, up the hill from Loganton, had drawn near to listen to the talk, now could remain silent no longer. "The water was different once, it used to be the best spring in all these valleys, only it



THE SULPHUR SPRING

got cursed in Indian times, and took on that awful taste and smell." The Gipsy chief looked at the white-bearded old veteran a minute, and then inquired good-naturedly, how the bewitching occurred that could have destroyed the general usefulness of this copious source of water.

"Well, sir, it was this way," said the old man, leaning against the wagon, with one foot resting on the hub. "Golden Treasure was the king of the Indians in this valley, and with the exception of Mountain River in Penn's Valley, was the greatest ruler the redmen had at that time. He had one daughter, the Princess Flower of Mirth, for whom he planned a brilliant future. His first idea was to marry her to Red Panther, old Mountain River's only son, but he was struck by lightning and killed while defying the Storm God, which put an end to hopes in that direction.

"Away down the country was a mighty chief called Iron Mountain, who had a son, My Hills and Valleys, said to be a most promising young warrior. Warfare with adjoin-

ing tribes, which took her father away, delayed sending ambassadors to arrange the union, and the beautiful Flower of Mirth was often left alone for weeks at a time in the kingly encampment, a quarter of a mile down the road from where your wagons are standing at present. Of course, there was an alert bodyguard to prevent sudden attack on the camp, and plenty of women of all ages, but the difference in rank kept all of these at a distance, which meant that the Princess was unmolested most of the time.

“One summer evening there was a comet in the sky, and the Princess, knowing that it generally foretold some war or pestilence, concluded she would go out into the mountains and get a good look at the celestial visitor. She was not a good walker, having been carried in litters all her life, and when she had gone only a few steps to the spring, felt tired and sat down on a rock to rest. She had not been there very long when she saw the figure of a young Indian approaching out of the hemlock wilderness.

“The night was so clear she could see his face plainly, and noticed that while he was not good looking, his appearance was striking and unusual. He was short, squarely built, with a large head, curly hair, deep set eyes and a sharp straight nose. He carried large baskets heavily laden, in each hand. When he saw her, he apologized for his intrusion, and would have passed on, had she not asked him if she was going in the proper direction to obtain the best view of the comet.

“The young Indian told her he was going to see the comet himself, and would feel honored if he could escort her to a magnificent point of vantage he had lately discovered. It was a rash act for the Indian Princess to accompany a stranger to the top of a mountain, at night, as it was an excursion likely to end in one of two ways—either she would be ill used, or would fall in love with her escort. On the way, the stranger explained that he was gifted with the power of second sight, and that he had been driven from his tribe far in the west, because of certain evil spells cast over his tribesmen, of which, he

assured the Princess, he was entirely innocent.

“Since the appearance of the comet, he had been visiting the mountain top every night, trying to unfathom its meaning. His studies were almost completed, and tonight he expected to know fully what was in store for the residents of the valley, which we now call Sugar Valley. The Princess was naturally interested in such a weird and remarkable young man, and in the charm of his conversation and enthusiasm, forgot his rather uncouth appearance.

“When they reached the summit, they stood together on a great flat boulder, watching silently the huge, brilliant, virile comet, tearing its way through the heavens, leaving a trail behind which seemed like the atoms of shattered stars that had tried to dispute its onward course. The Princess felt cold and instinctively drew near to her companion, and soon their hands were touching, and before long his arm was around her. She had never been close to a man before, and the thrill which the stranger sent through

her, vibrated and throbbed from head to foot.

“She forgot all about time, and the heavens were swallowing up the stars when they began their downward climb. On the way, she asked him if he had read the secret of the comet to his satisfaction. He was slow to answer, but finally told her that he could see nothing in it that meant disaster to her father, or her family, or to any other Indian, except himself. He said it disclosed the story of his own ruin, and that this night of happiness was to be one of the last he would ever experience.

Flower of Mirth chided him for being so downcast after they had spent such a blissful evening together, and he was inconsolable until she promised to meet him at the spring the next evening. It was almost daybreak when he left her at the outskirts of the encampment, and skulked off into the dense forest. The next night she was true to her promise, and met him, and they reclinced the rocky mountain, and marveled at the comet, and became loving to one another off there by themselves on that remote pinnacle

of the world. The stranger did not reveal his rank, although if he was gifted with the power of second sight it gave him a title of nobility, but even at that he must have been far below the Princess in birth, still such a difference counted for nothing, as they made love and let the hours slip by.

“For ten nights consecutively they met, each one seemingly more enchanting than its predecessors. On the eleventh night, at dusk, the stranger was sitting on the rock by the spring, waiting for the Princess Flower of Mirth, anticipating another gladsome session on the mountain peak. In his hand he held a small bunch of carefully selected wild-flowers, the only tribute he could bestow upon his beloved, as he was not a hunter. He had to wait longer than usual, and was getting impatient, when he heard bursts of laughter on the path leading to where he rested.

“Pretty soon he discerned the form of the Princess, but by her side was the towering and athletic figure of an Indian youth, trimmed and tufted with elks’ teeth and eagle feathers, betokening his high rank. Back of

the couple, at a respectful distance, marched two aged chiefs; one of them was Golden Treasure, and the other was evidently the father of the Indian Prince. Flower of Mirth and her companion were evidently deeply interested in one another, for they continued to laugh, and their steps were light and joyous. When they reached the spring the stalwart Prince leaned down to fill a gourd full of water, and, while he did so, the Princess turned her head away, so as to look as if she did not see the stranger rising from the nearby rock, with the bunch of flowers in his hand.

“As the Prince handed her the water, she had to look in the direction of the stranger, who stepped forward smilingly, and attempted to give her the flowers. As he held out his hand, old Golden Treasure, who had come close beside him, dealt him a terrible blow on the side of his head, and he fell forward on his face on the flat slab laid out before the spring. As he struck it he began to change quickly, losing all semblance of human form, while the terrified quartet,

Flower of Mirth, her father, Golden Treasure, and her new lover, My Hills and Valleys, and his father, the old chief, Iron Mountain, cowered against the trees and vines in abject terror.

“Gradually his form was blended into a compact mass, which then began to elongate, and assume a greenish tint, and take on masses of scales. The hair fell out of his head, and a smooth gleaming scalp sprouting horns, and a rounded jowl with fangs and hateful greenish-yellow eyes materialized. The monster, when the transformation was complete, rose to its full length, spitting venom in every direction.

“This was too much for the stalwart My Hills and Valleys; he leaped at the reptile with his war club, but before he could strike a blow, it had turned, and quick as a flash, squirmed into the rocks back of the spring, from which the crystalline water gurgled. As it vanished, Flower of Mirth fell to the earth unconscious, and the old chiefs, and My Hills and Valleys, seized gourds of water to dash over her brow.

“As they dipped up the water the smell was unbearable, and Iron Mountain, with more hardihood than the rest, touched his cup to his lips, dropping it instantly with a shriek of disgust. The Indian encampment was aroused, and rushed out in a body, lighting their way to the spring with blazing pine torches. The dazed victims of the unwholesome tragedy were carried back to camp, but it was days before they recovered their senses.

“When old Golden Treasure was able to move about, he ordered the regal encampment moved to the furthest western extremity of the valley, and all the tents and bowers were burnt. My Hills and Valleys, after the episode, began to “cool off” in his lover-like propensities, and it was only when Chief Golden Treasure threatened to declare war against his people, that his father induced him to go ahead with the ceremony, which united him to the Princess Flower of Mirth.

“The marriage took place and the couple started eastward, but were ambushed and cut to pieces by unknown Indians, directly

across the valley from the fated spring. But despite this retribution of blood, the water never regained its pristine sweetness, but seemed to grow fouler tasting and more ill-smelling as the years went by. No one ever sees a snake of any description near the sulphur spring, as they all feared the monstrous serpent that coiled itself within the rocky recesses of the source on that awful night, when My Hills and Valleys, and Flower of Mirth plighted their troth.

“Last year, when Halley’s comet ruled the heavens, some boys who were driving home late one night from a festival at Rosecrans, saw what looked to them like a giant saw-log lying across the road opposite the spring house. They got out of their wagon to roll it away, but as they drew near, it commenced to squirm and vanished with a mournful groan in the tall grass and bushes by the spring.

“Perhaps the uncanny stranger had hoped the comet would bring back the spirit of Flower of Mirth, but as a writer aptly put it in deploring that each happiness exists but

once, 'the first fine rapture was not to be caught again,' and he was doomed to disappointment. It cannot be believed that the perfidious Indian Princess is at ease, in the Happy Hunting Ground."

"Whew," said Bill Stanley, "that's a hel-cramite of a story; let's get out of here double quick." He climbed into the driver's box, cracking his long whip, and the bells on the ill-assorted horses were soon jingling as they hauled the green and white wagons across the bridge and were lost to view among the hemlocks.

VII.

THE PANTHER HIDE



UT in the White Mountains, that great, irregular granite range that forms part of the natural boundary between Union and Snyder counties, is what might be styled a "Devil's Den." A huge sink, it is, covering an area of possibly five hun-

dred acres, situated on the summit of one of the highest mountains. Until a few years ago on account of the expense of removal, and breakage, the original timber was standing in this natural "reserve."

The trees, mostly white pines, did not grow very close together, but each one rose from a pile of loose, moss-covered rocks, as if fortified against the inroads of man. There were many speculations as to the origin of this vast sink. Some said it was once a lake, like Lewis's Lake, which is called by the hotel-

men, Eaglesmere. Others declared it to be the crater of an extinct volcano, which sounded most plausible, as the exact centre was depressed and full of fissures; the sides were deeply covered with broken stones varying in size from a baseball to boulders weighing a ton.

These loose rocks made natural caverns, and were sought out as hiding places for the wild animals of the neighboring regions. Packs of wolves were driven out only after great effort and a few stragglers still make it their retreat.

Bears, foxes, wild cats, catamounts, panthers, raccoons, fishers and wolverenes were killed there. Eagles, innumerable hawks, ravens and buzzards frequented the dizzy heights of the pine trees. It was a hard place for hunters to approach, but when they did, they were nearly always rewarded with a good bag.

A season never passed without a couple of bears being trapped, and for a number of years, annually, panthers were taken out. A period of ten years had ensued without

a panther having been killed, but rumor was persistent of one being seen about the "den." One winter the cold weather set in before Thanksgiving, and panther tracks were noticed in every direction.

None of the settlers in the fertile ravines, or on the slopes of Jack's mountains to the south complained of losing any stock, still it was an uncomfortable feeling to have a panther wandering about so close to the farm houses. As winter progressed the brute seemed to lose his shyness, and appeared to about every unarmed person on the mountain. Children coming home from Sunday school at Troxelville, would see it lying in the road; it would show its deference by getting up and letting them pass. Women, whose husbands were out hunting or cutting logs, would find it curled up in the manger when they went to the stable to hunt for eggs. It would lie still until they left the barn, then it would crawl out of its nest and start for the "tall timber." Men in buggies and wagons would see it crouched on rocks or logs by the roadside, but it never stirred a muscle until

they were safely out of sight. No one with a rifle, or even a revolver, could see it; it seemed to have a scent which was trained to the smell of gun barrels and powder.

Out of a hundred persons who had met with it, and a hundred more whose premises it had visited, not a soul could say that it had acted towards them and their property other than in a "genteel" manner. In one of the loneliest hollows, a young hunter named Johnny Corman, had made his home for several years. He lumbered a little, cleared a few acres in his spare time, and built a fair sized house. It looked like a layer-cake, it had so many different kinds and sizes of lumber in its construction. The mountaineers called it "the house of many colors." When he got it finished he began to feel lonely, so his fancy rested upon pretty Mildred Huey, the daughter of a farmer who lived near the old distillery in the Middle Creek Valley. .

Johnny was a handsome fellow, with clear cut features, a good nose, and a square, determined chin; there was nothing against him on that score—but he was somehow ac-

counted shiftless. His life in the mountains and his hunting and fishing exploits gave color to that reputation. Mildred was sent to an aunt in Lock Haven, considered a vast distance from Troxelville, and her parents breathed contentedly for a time. Johnny, so as not to attract notice, left his horse at Glen Iron, and walked to Lock Haven, met the girl; they took out a license, and were married.

She told her aunt to write the folks what she had done, then she returned with her husband to his many-colored house in the mountains. On the drive out from Glen Iron, where they had come by train, while lying in Johnny's arms, she confided to him that her family were "hanted," that is they were followed by ghosts, and he must not be surprised if he saw some around their new home. The bridegroom laughed heartily; he did not believe in any such thing; ghosts were played out; they belonged only to old people.

The horse was pulling up a steep pitch in the road, when all at once he stopped, and began to back down hill. It was not quite

dark, so the keen-eyed woodsman looked ahead for the trouble before he even began to urge the animal forward. To his surprise, he saw a monster panther sitting on its haunches in the road on the summit of the rise. He forgot about the dangers of a horse backing a buggy down a steep hill, yanked out his revolver, and fired four shots at the impertinent brute. It never stirred, his usually true aim had gone amiss. Then the buggy struck a rock and overturned, and Johnny, Mildred, her suit case, the cushions and robes were in a tangled mass among the huckleberry bushes.

Luckily the horse did not try to run, and nobody was hurt. One wheel was, however, irretrievably dished, so they rigged a pole to keep the buggy steady, threw the suit case aboard, and the newly-married couple walked the balance of the distance. The panther had disappeared while they were repairing the turnout, so they saw no more of it until after they got into the house and had retired.

The night was cold and frosty; there was a half-formed moon. They had barely settled

in the four-poster, when the most hideous screaming was heard in the garden. They looked out, and beheld the panther crowded in the lea of the paling fence, howling at the moon like a sentimental watch dog. Johnny called to his hounds, but they were strangely apathetic. He struck a light, and loaded his new Savage rifle, model of 1899, and took careful aim at the beast, which lay less than fifty feet away. The shots rang out, but instead of a dead panther, there was no panther at all.

"Were we dreaming, Mildred?" said Johnny, after he had looked in vain for a bleeding carcass. He climbed into his corduroy trousers and went into the garden. Mildred, a pretty picture of fright and innocence, stood inside the half-closed door calling to her beloved not to run any chances. He saw the spot where the animal had laid, but it had evidently cleared the palings with one bound. He went around to the kennel, only to find both dogs sound asleep. He roused them, and gave them a clubbing, but the poor beasts never knew what it was for.

He returned to the house and the balance of the night was spent in peace and comfort.

The next night no panther was about, and the day after that Johnny took his horse to go to Glen Iron to make some purchases. Mildred, who was washing, said she didn't mind his absence for a few hours. About noon she fancied he ought to be back, so she looked out of the front door. Outside the gate lay the panther sound asleep. She hurried to the back of the house, and called the dogs, but this time they were among the missing. She didn't know much about the use of firearms, but not being lacking in courage, she seized Johnny's rifle, which was loaded, locked the door, and took aim through the open window. The bullet went through one of the palings of the gate, but the panther, unscathed, got up, stretched himself, and sauntered away.

Less than five minutes later her husband appeared. He had heard the shot, and guessed what it meant. He would have doubted that she had actually seen the animal were it not for the impression of its body in the mud.

That night there was nothing unusual, but the one following, they heard, but did not see the intruder. The next morning they started for Glen Iron in the buggy, meeting Adam Straub, an old-time hunter, on the road.

"I'm on my way to the 'sink,'" he told them, as he held up his rifle proudly. "I've set a trap for that panther that comes through this country every winter—he's bolder than ever this year. This is the tenth year I've been on his trail, but I sort of feel this year he'll bite the dust."

"We were just going after you," said Johnny, "that panther's not in the 'sink,' at present, his headquarters are around our house—this is my wife I just married," pointing proudly to the pretty looking black-eyed girl by his side.

"At your house, that damned panther; he's got an awful nerve. Why can't you, after all the bears you've finished, take him into camp?"

"I've shot at him a dozen times," said Johnny sheepishly, "but I think the brute's bewitched, I can't hit him."

“Can I spend the night at your place?” asked old Straub.

“Cert,” said Johnny, “we’ll turn around, and this afternoon we can lay our plans, and if we two don’t get him in the next forty-eight hours we’ll know the reason why.”

They drove back to the house of many colors, with old Adam tramping along behind. They had a jolly time arranging the campaign, and at bedtime the old hunter was assigned to the room adjoining the bridal chamber. The moon was nearly full, and its soft light mellowed the garden, the picket fence, the stumps, the field of burnt saplings beyond, the gaunt yellow pines along the edges of the clearing.

At midnight a scream like a woman in agony was heard among the pines. It grew nearer and nearer, and Johnny and old Adam were at the windows with rifles ready. Out of a thicket of chestnut sprouts a dusky form appeared, seemingly magnified fourfold by the moonlight. It paused and glared at the determined men in the windows of the house across the lane. The rapid click-bang-bang

of two rifles resounded on the frosty night, but the panther remained rigid until the last cartridge was spent, and calmly turned around and retreated.

“Young man,” called old Adam through the partition, “that’s no panther we’ve been following, it’s a deil; no wonder he couldn’t be trapped. Does that wife of yours come from a ‘hanted’ family? If she does, it explains why the varmint is making a specialty of parading around your premises.”

“She sure does come from a ‘spooked’ family,” answered Johnny. Mildred raised up in bed and looked at him wistfully as if she wondered he would love her less for it. “Go to sleep now,” called old Adam. “I’ll fix that panther in the morning. I can lay any spook or witch in the country. There’s not one of them can stand up against me. Good night, everybody.”

Johnny could hear the “click” as he turned out his lamp, and climbed into his couch. About daylight the old hunter struck out for Glen Iron, but in the early afternoon he was back carrying several bundles. These in-

cluded a plumber's torch and a cartridge mold. He asked Johnny for his cartridge box and took several of them, prying out the leaden tips. Then he melted three silver dollars, and put the metal in the mold. When they had cooled off, he placed the silver tips in the cartridges from which he had removed the lead.

"Tonight that hex, or panther, or whatever it is will die," he solemnly declared as he loaded the rifle with the silver bullets. The winter moon shone through the frost-laden, vapory atmosphere just as it did the night before, the gaunt yellow pines with their uplifted branches fringed the sky-line at the edge of the clearing.

Johnny and Mildred seated themselves by the window of the room on a heavy trunk, while old Adam drew his bed to the window of his room and awaited developments. At midnight the first faint cries of the panther echoed from the ravine behind the pines. Closer and closer it came, roaring like a lion when it reached the slashings, descending to a guttural growl as its head emerged

by the edge of the lane. Adam Straub, lying across his couch, took careful aim, "crack-bang-bang" went the rifle, and with a cry intensely human, the panther sprang twenty feet in the air, and lay quivering in the middle of the road.

Adam carrying the rifle, and Johnny with his hunting knife were by his side in a minute, but he was stiff and dead, so they proceeded to skin him. The animal was a male, and measured by Mildred's tape eleven and a half feet from tip to tip. There was no sleep for any of the household that night.

At dawn, the ground being frozen hard, the flayed carcass was buried in a hole that had been started for a well, and rocks and stumps were thrown in to fill it. After breakfast the hide was put in the wagon, and the trio drove to Middleburg to "show off" the unusual trophy. The court-house was closed, so they could not claim a bounty that afternoon but they exhibited the hide on the steps of the Jefferson hotel across the way where it was viewed by hundreds of people.

Next morning there was some question

about paying the bounty, as none had been paid on panthers in fifteen years, and the treasurer wanted them to leave the hide with him until he could get an opinion from the county solicitor. Johnny refused, and took it to the tannery, to have it made into a rug. In due course of time he received word it was finished, so he came after it, taking it again to the court-house. The county treasurer said he doubted if any bounty could be paid on a tanned hide, which made Johnny angry, and he threw it into the wagon box and started for the White Mountains. At his home it was admired by the mountaineers for a few days, then he put it for safe keeping on a trestle in the garret; it was too valuable to be scuffed about as a rug. One thing was lacking, the tanner had omitted to provide it with glass eyes.

Time passed, the "panther scare" was forgotten, and another autumn was at hand. One October night Johnny and Mildred were returning from a call at the home of a couple named Schultz who had started to build a house and clear some land about two miles

down the hollow. Half-way home they heard a cracking of dry underbrush. The moon's rays giving them a clear vision, they were horrified to see a hideous object bob out of the bushes and cross the path. It was the hide of a panther flapping along on some disjointed carriers, and it looked all the world like a manikin propelled by a string. They might have thought it a joke, for Hallowe'en was near, had not the thing let out a pitiful squall and besides Johnny had in his vest pocket the key to the Yale lock of the attic door where the hide was kept.

It disappeared in a thicket of young hemlocks and the dismayed couple hurried to their home. They went to the garret finding the lock untouched, but on opening the door saw the hide was not to be found. In the morning, fearing they had been dreaming in the moonlit woods, they re-opened the attic, but this time the hide lay in the same position across the trestle as it had been placed there several months before. That night they were awakened by the awful barking of the dogs, and from the window they

could see them in bitter conflict with a horrible unsteady monster without eyes in the corner of the yard. The dogs were pretty well scarred when they examined them the next morning, but to convince themselves, Johnny and Mildred went to the garret and examined the hide. It had been tanned with the skull and teeth left in, and the white fangs were covered with fresh blood.

Brave man that he was, Johnny dropped the hide, and with Mildred rushed from the garret. They harnessed the horse, and drove as fast as they could to find old Adam Straub. The good old man was getting supper when they reached his humble cabin in the foothills near the old furnace, but he listened with interest to the recital.

“It was very dumb of me not to have thought of that,” he answered slowly. “Spend the night with me, and tomorrow go back and bury that panther hide in the same pit with the carcass; then you will have laid this ghost for good and all. They tell me,” he went on, “some Indian that was killed by one of your wife’s ancestors took on a panther’s

form, and that is the creature which has been seen in these mountains for so many years. I don't reckon there's been a real panther in Snyder county since 1885, when they paid bounty on one at Middleburg. If the silver in my shell had been pure, you wouldn't needed to have buried the hide, but it wasn't pure, so it's worth any trouble to get rid of such a pest."

Johnny and Mildred drove leisurely back to the house of many colors, walked boldly up the attic stairs, carried down the great, smooth, tawney hide. It seemed a pity to lose it, but they threw it in the pit on top of the disintegrated carcass. Johnny filled the hole solidly with rocks and stumps, and after a lapse of ten years the couple have never been disturbed by its presence.

VIII.

MARSH MARIGOLD



WE were driving, one afternoon in July, through the east end of Brush Valley, and Bonnie Dundee, our faithful horse, trotted at the proper gait to enable us to take in all the sights of this quaint, out of the world region. I had not been this

way for five years, and every mile or so would decry some act of vandalism perpetrated since my former visits; a giant tree felled here, an old log cabin razed there, and a gaping quarry opened on a quiet hill-side over yonder.

My companion, better versed than I in the vagaries of the local temperament, was excusing the desecrations—"that tree shaded the field," "that old house was tumbling down," "the poor man needed the money and had to begin quarrying," or "the price

of timber tempted the widow," and so on, putting a less uncomplimentary construction on their acts. When we came within a mile of Livonia I began to look ahead along the straight road to catch sight of the two huge wild cherry trees, which stood by the road below Moses Smitgall's barn. But I could only see one tree, and as we drew near, the high-cut stump showed where the other had recently stood.

"What a terrible shame to have slashed down one of Francis Penn's Betrothal Trees," I cried out in righteous indignation. "That is the worst thing we have seen on the entire trip. I don't see what harm it could have done if left standing."

My companion was equally upset by what was a real act of vandalism, and after we passed Stover's and started up the mountain to cross into Sugar Valley, I went over the story of the Betrothal Tree, Francis Penn, and the beautiful Indian maid, Marsh Mari-gold.

About the middle of the Eighteenth Century, Richard Penn, the Proprietary of the

Province of Pennsylvania, had sent a number of young surveyors into the central part of his domain to lay out and draw maps of the various parcels of land which were to be turned over to desirable settlers. Among them was one young man, who, by birth and talents, was clearly above his fellows. He was Francis Penn, son of a full cousin of the Proprietor, and a graduate of Oxford and holder of degrees from two German universities. His early philosophical bent had led him into religious speculation, and beginning as a member of the Church of England he swung into deism, then adopted the beliefs of the Friends like his immortal relative.

In this last affiliation he was perfectly happy and the staid Quakers appeared proud to own him as one of their number. Despite his life of study and religious experience, he had led a stormy career, as far as went affairs of the heart, and that was the sole reason of his presence in the wilds of Pennsylvania. He had been betrothed to one of the most charming young girls in England, Lady Elizabeth Vane-Tempest, who favored him

ahead of a score of other acceptable suitors.

All seemed to go smoothly with the young couple until two weeks before the wedding, when her ladyship disappeared. At the same time a Dutchman, short, and ill-favored, who served in a dragoon regiment quartered near her father's town house, dropped out of sight. They were apprehended together on the point of embarking for Holland and the fellow jumped into the channel to save his neck, and escaped. The girl was brought home, but Francis Penn never noticed her existence again.

As a vision of blonde loveliness she was unexcelled, her exquisite coloring and features being partially preserved in an unfinished painting by Romney which is sometimes handed out of the store-room for the edification of art critics at the ancestral halls of her family in Surrey.

But Penn was to have his revenge. One night on Fleet Street he was jostled by a low-browed villain in sailor clothes, who, seeing the young Quaker in the garb of his faith and doubtless unarmed, thought he

could antagonize him, and in the scuffle knife him easily. But the youthful Quaker was not so easy, and met the sailor's jostle with a powerful wrench, which sent him reeling into an iron railing where he ran a picket through his eye into his brain, dying in the gutter in a few minutes. As Penn bent over the expiring wretch he recognized the features of the Dutch dragoon who had eloped and abandoned the beautiful Lady Elizabeth Vane-Tempest.

After that disagreeable incident he sailed for Pennsylvania, where he was assigned to the surveying corps, and made rapid progress with his work. His appearance so closely resembled that of William Penn that he became a prime favorite with the Indians. The older chiefs declared it was the Apostle of Brotherly Love come back to life again, and he was often sent into turbulent localities to restore tranquility by his presence. He refused many offers of advancement, saying that he would only remain temporarily in the province and could only hold a position from

which his resignation at any day would be of no moment.

The government had been having considerable trouble with a brave called Rock Pine, whose headquarters were the entire eastern part of what is now Brush Valley. He had ambushed and slaughtered one surveyor, and the provincial authorities were undecided as to how to adjust the case. Francis Penn was suggested, so the young man, accompanied by a body-guard of five friendly redskins, set out for an interview with the recalcitrant warrior. When they reached his tent, they found the old fellow sitting on a panther's hide, smoking. At first he refused to look up, but when he heard two of the body guards laugh at some witty remark of their white leader, he raised his eyes. Having met William Penn years before at Skakamaxon and noting the remarkable likeness, he was on his feet in an instant, apologizing as he termed it for the "rudeness of an old, half-blind hunter." Within an hour he granted all the demands of the proprietary establishment and offered to indemnify the family, if

there were any, of the dead surveyor whom he acknowledged was slain by some of his tribesmen. He invited the party to remain a month with him; they elected to remain over night.

At dinner time young Penn made the acquaintance of old Rock Pine's daughter Marsh Marigold, and he remained the month. Our general idea of Indian Maidens comes from pictures of flatfaced Sioux and from the hosts of underbred, and mixed blooded squaws who follow Wild West shows or attend government schools. The Indian girls of royal blood, long ago, especially the Senecas, were noted for their beauty and not a few Europeans fell victims to their charms.

In Virginia it was the same way. Indian princesses were courted, and Pocahontas was feted and admired when her English husband took her to his old home.

"In the first place she (*Marsh Marigold*) was not copper colored, her complexion was white, but in cold weather a little red showed in it. Her eyes were almost black, deeply set and expressive, with long black lashes and

narrow arched brows. Her lips were the color of corals and just full enough to show that her nature abounded with love. Her teeth were a most attractive feature; they were small, luminous like pearls, and set in even rows. She was tall rather than short, erect, and slender, her dark hair was soft and on damp days was inclined to curl. Her nose was just a trifle aquiline, but the nostrils were well-moulded, open. The nose was not straight, but was a little more pronounced on the left side than on the right. This tripled her beauty, for she was one person on the right side, another full face, a third on the left side, all equally radiantly lovely. Her manners were open and kindly, and she gave the impression of frankness and honor."

We would be at a loss to present such a detailed description of the personal appearance of this now almost forgotten Indian girl, but for the discovery ten years ago, of Francis Penn's journal in an old chest in the ruins of Fort Augusta at Sunbury, from which the above is quoted, but that is another story.

Penn took to her at once, while she seemed to seek his society. The first evening they violated all Indian customs by taking a long walk together to the waterfall half-way up the mountain above Livonia which still splashes down over the rocks, but in diminished quantities. Next day the young Englishman announced he would remain in the valley for some days in order to complete some elaborate maps. Everybody seemed pleased, and the courtship apparently advanced with each evening.

Having had troubles of his own, Penn hesitated about asking Marsh Marigold if she had any other lover. If he had he might have learned a sad story. A young redskin named Leaning Birch courted her, but his shiftlessness had estranged old Rock Pine, and he had ordered the youth driven from the camp. The couple had met clandestinely in the forests several times, but the old warrior became wise to this, and threatened Leaning Birch with being burned at the stake if captured. The shiftless Indian apparently skipped the country and the romance ostensibly ended.

At the end of a month Francis Penn and Marsh Marigold decided to marry, and so informed old Rock Pine. Had it been any other white man he would probably have been tomahawked on the spot, but William Penn's relative and likeness was too desirable a personage, and he gave the young couple his fondest blessings. The betrothal took place with full ceremonial, and in honor of the occasion Penn and his promised bride each planted a young wild cherry tree as a token that "the early blossoming of their love would bear fruit by a speedy marriage."

Then Penn's relative bade *au revoir* to the adorable Marsh Marigold, to Rock Pine, and all the other members of the tribe, and started with his body guard for Philadelphia to make arrangements for the wedding and embarking for England. He was to return in about a month. Marsh Marigold, the beautiful, pined for days after he had gone, and often walked to the waterfall alone, and sat by the swift torrent for hours thinking of her absent lover. Francis Penn was not less ardent, for he sent back swift Indian runners

every few days while on his journey with messages protesting his love and eternal devotion.

One morning while the girl was seated by the waterfall, meditating and despondent, she heard the patter of moccasined feet on the pine needles. She looked around, and to her dismay, she saw the figure of Leaning Birch. The shiftless and discarded lover looked the picture of misery. He was lame, had lost one eye, and the left side of his mouth was cut back clear to his ear, and every tooth on that side was missing. Had he looked his natural self she would have scorned him, but his mutilated face aroused her pity, and she listened to his addresses. He sat down beside her, and soon was pouring out his tale of woe. He had been captured and sentenced to death down country, had escaped, been captured by another tribe, but had broken loose from his captors although not without being pounded, gouged, and slashed after the manner indicated by his appearance.

Then Marsh Marigold told her story, how she had met Francis Penn, the distinguished young Englishman, who had fallen in love with her; he was even now on his way back from Philadelphia to make her his wife and take her to preside over his estates in England. The crafty ex-lover saw his opening, and asked her if she thought she could leave her beloved mountains, would she be happy so far from home, among a strange people, and was it not a big risk for so young a girl to take? This set the maiden to thinking, and after the five hours talk she went back to her father nursing a new sorrow. Though she had made no appointment, a strange instinct drew her back to the waterfall next day. Leaning Birch joined her, and that afternoon when she returned she felt that her Indian suitor had been misjudged, and wasn't such a bad fellow after all.

After the third meeting she decided she would never go to England, after the fourth she would run away to the north with Leaning Birch. With him she concocted a message to Penn, to be delivered to the runner

who would arrive that night with tidings of the young suitor's speedy arrival. She was to meet Leaning Birch at a point several miles down the main path from the camp and help him intercept the runner. Behind the broken stump of a tree they waited, and when the breathless runner came by, Leaning Birch sprang forward and knocked him senseless with a heavy staff. When the unfortunate messenger "came to" Marsh Mari-gold gave him her message, which he put in his belt, and Leaning Birch gagged and tied him securely to the stump.

That done they retraced their steps, starting up the mountain in the direction of Sugar Valley. He had it planned that they would hide in the Oriole caves in Nippenose Valley for a week and make a raft in the underground current and float out to the Susquehanna river and then gradually work their way north until they were lost from possible pursuers in the mazes of the Black Forest. But they had not gone any further than the waterfall when Marsh Marigold began to change her mind again. First she walked

along silently, paying no attention to the glowing plans for the future as outlined by her companion. Then she summoned courage and told him she did not love him, that she adored and admired the personality and character of Francis Penn. It was not too late, they could return and release the Indian runner, and he could have time to get away to the caves before Rock Pine learned the story. She would confess all to her fiance, and she knew he would forgive her.

Leaning Birch listened to this talk with ill-concealed anger, and caught her by the arm as if to drag her away with him. She swung herself loose, and started to run down the rocky path. The hideous Indian made after her, but she was fleet of foot, and he was lame. She seemed to be gaining on him, so he lurched forward and knocked her to the earth with his hickory staff. As she attempted to rise he beat her down, finally splitting her skull with a final savage blow.

The Indian maiden died with the name of Francis Penn on her lips, and her cowardly murderer started up the mountain again.

When he reached the waterfall he attempted to cross the creek, but his lame foot slipped into a crevice in the rocks, which held him as in a trap. He howled and cursed, and dragged and tugged, but he was a hopeless captive. After some hours he drew his hunting knife and attempted to cut off his foot, but when he saw the blood flowing he was too cowardly to persist.

At daybreak he heard the sound of many footsteps and muffled voices drawing nearer and nearer. Soon to his horror he beheld Rock Pine, grim and menacing, accompanied by a hundred tribesmen armed for battle, the Indian runner with his head bandaged, and a stalwart figure clad in black, with set face ivory white, the bereaved Francis Penn. As they approached with measured tread, Leaning Birch wondered what his fate would be. Most probably slow torture of some kind, he reasoned, but he was quickly put out of the way very differently. Out of the funeral procession the Indian runner executed one of his famous leaps, at the same time un-sheathing a long, thin knife. He was on top

of the murderer as quickly as an eagle pounces on a lamb, and cut his heart out before anyone could utter a protest.

With screams of agony the fiend yielded up the ghost, and died with Francis Penn looking him full in the face. Turning to Rock Pine, the unfortunate lover said quietly, "Bury him under the waterfall so that the pure rivulets will cleanse his evil spirit." A dozen braves lifted out the great flat stones, and the reeking body of Leaning Birch minus the heart which the Indian runner hung on his belt, was dropped with a splash into the bottom of the watery cavity. Then the slabs were thrown over him, and the waterfall went tripping its way as before.

In the afternoon Marsh Marigold was laid to rest between the Betrothal Trees and Francis Penn said farewell to Rock Pine, leaving immediately for the East, never to return. He fell sick at Fort Augusta, where he wrote many pages of his journal, which was stolen from him by one of his Indian retainers the night before he set out from there for Philadelphia. Strange to say the manu-

script has come to light after a hundred and fifty years.

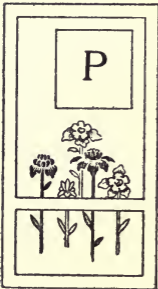
As for Penn, he was last heard of in India, where he is said to have died of a pestilence about 1795. It seems a pity that a narrative like this must revive the memory of such a foul monster as Leaning Birch, but evil spirits have a greater knack of persisting than good ones. It may be satisfying to some to think that his soul is not at rest.

Old settlers declare that every year on the night of the anniversary of the crime a distorted being, up to his waist in water, can be seen seated in the bowl of the waterfall. A red discharge gushes from a gaping hole in his left breast, and he holds his hands convulsively over the wound as if to try and staunch the flow. But it continues to pour forth, and mingles with the eddies and whirls and froth of the pool. Sometimes when the winds are high, he cries out sharply, as if his caged spirit wanted to escape into the storm. Always on the day after particles of reddish substance are found in the pool, and adhering to the rocks of the stream along the gorge.

Doubters say it means there is a deposit of iron ore somewhere, but those who have seen the hideous bather know it is the soul's blood of his eternal expiation. Maybe with the cutting down of one of the Betrothal Trees the spell is broken, but there are many who believe that Leaning Birch will appear again this September.

IX.

STORY OF THE PICTURE ROCKS



PICTURE ROCKS as the name of a postoffice, Picture Rocks the name of a railroad station in Lycoming county, are known to most everyone. True enough, the rocks are to be seen, but it is hard for the most imaginative to discern how they

could have obtained their name. The surface, ripped and scarred by landslides, quarries, the running of logs and the frosts and thaws of years, seem too uneven to have ever displayed an artist's handiwork.

Many declared that they were named because of their "picturesqueness," and not from any portraits or signs cut or painted on their face. But the early settlers had a story, and not such an old one, either, which told of a day when the great rocks which rise from the base to the summit of the moun-

tains at this point, were as smooth as modern blackboards in a cross-roads school house.

For five or six successive centuries the Indian chieftains in the Loyalsock and Muncy Valleys had pictorial records of their greatest victories painted on the rocks. The Indians were adepts at discovering and mixing colors, and the artistic sense, though to us seemingly crude, had many elements of dignity and impressiveness. In later years one chief had attempted to have the pictures cut and not painted on the rocks, but the strata was too soft and probably started the disintegration that was followed by the white lumbermen and quarriers.

It is difficult to assign a date to a legend of this kind, but we assume that it was about the year 1760, when a party of French settlers from Berks county found their way into the fertile regions around the Picture Rocks. The year before, Wolf's Pathway, a noted Seneca "King," had crushed a serious insurrection among his tribesmen, and in the skirmishes and battles—including a "canoe" battle—fought at night on the Susquehanna,

near what is now Nippeno Park, over a thousand redskins of both factions were killed.

It was the wish of the conquering chieftain to have his success perpetuated pictorially on the rocks, so he commissioned his young cousin, Fisher Fox, the most talented Indian artist in the entire country at that time, to paint the historic occurrence. He was to represent the fight in the canoes at night, with the triumphant followers of Wolf's Pathway climbing into the boats of their enemies, and killing them with their stone-headed clubs.

On the shore the women were to be shown running along lighting the way of their heroes, with huge fire-brands. To accomplish this, a painting done some thirty-five years before, depicting the victory of the father of Wolf's Pathway—Old Merciless—over his life-long adversary, Golden Treasure, with the intrepid old warrior in the very act of splitting his rival's skull with his tomahawk, while the victim's henchmen stood by, too awed by the proceeding to rush to his succor, had to be obliterated. Indians, at

least in these old days, were anything but sentimental.

This took considerable time, but Fisher Fox had a daring scheme in mind, which soon began to blossom forth on the expansive background. The central figure was to be Wolf's Pathway himself, attired in full chief-tain's regalia, standing with one foot in his own canoe, while the other was in another boat on the throat of one of the leading insurgents. With each hand he was choking to death two other noted rebels who were in the same canoe as the wretch being ground beneath his heel.

One bright morning in July he was high on his scaffold of white birch poles, painting away at the heroic figure of Wolf's Pathway, when he heard the singing of songs in a foreign tongue, down among the hemlocks by the bed of the stream. Years previously, in order to give a better view of the historical paintings a vast clearing had been made in front of the Picture Rocks. Every chief who had his deeds emblazoned there decreed a fresh clearing of this space, so that it was

always open, and the buffaloes, elk and deer often grazed there. The singing grew nearer, until several heavy covered wagons drawn by oxen, with outriders on horseback, came in sight.

The Indian artist put some extra flourishes to his brush, and mixed in richer and deeper tints to "show off" to the strangers. As he was alone, he was in a decidedly amicable spirit. The ox teams halted directly below the scaffolding in order that the travellers might look at the painting and faces began to peer out from the back of the wagons, and children clambered down on the grass and ran about and played. One young woman, with a particularly heavy head of dark brown hair and sparkling hazel eyes, looked out and caught the eye of the artist. As she did so, she called out in French: "Who ever saw such a foolish looking picture; aren't you ashamed of yourself?"

Fisher Fox knew a little French and could guess the rest from her gestures and laughter, and he scowled deeply and cursed under his breath at this ridicule of his masterpiece.

But some of the other members of the party, especially the men on horseback, were not so critical, and loudly praised its execution. Perhaps they were afraid to offend the Indian lest he complain to his chief, and start hostilities with the Frenchmen. At any rate they stayed so long and talked so much that they decided to halt where they were, and a couple of the men, having found heavy springs of water nearby, announced that they would make their homesteads on the spot.

Until they had time to erect their one-roomed log cabins the pioneers lived in their wagons, and the broad sward at the foot of the rocks soon presented an animated aspect. The horses and oxen were picketed, chickens and geese were released from their coops, and not a few dogs and cats made themselves at home under the heavy trucks. The dogs barked in a chorus with the wolves and foxes at night. The cats had a rich feast on birds which were so plentiful and tame, that they were easily caught.

The settlers killed nearly a hundred buffaloes the first month and their hides and flesh

were hung to dry on poles about the camps. During these hunting expeditions, which consumed days, when it would seem the men ought have been building their huts, for the summer was passing rapidly, the women and children remained around the wagons, guarded by old Etienne Binet, whose name has been corrupted into Binney, by unappreciative generations.

Binet was an expert shot, and was accounted capable of guarding the party in case of Indian attack, which seemed unlikely, as the land pre-empted had been paid for long previous to the settlers arriving in the valley. The young dark woman who had laughed at the Indian artist's frescoes on the Picture Rocks, began to show some interest in the production as it developed from day to day. Being agile, in response to an invitation from him, she climbed up and took a seat beside him, and watched him mix his colors and ply his facile brush.

The two became quite friendly, and gradually grew able to talk together freely. She told him that her name was Georgie Dupre,

a cognomen now known in Pennsylvania as Dippery, that she was the wife of Bernon Dupre, the leader of the band of settlers. Before her marriage her name was De La Planche, now called Plank, and her father, old Jacob De La Planche, was one of the best known of the earliest French pioneers of Berks county. Her husband and her father had quarreled, she said, over some cattle, and the former had decided to move "up country," hence their appearance in the Muncy Valley.

Fisher Fox, the artist, was a curious type of Indian. He was undersized, of a deep copper color, had small, pale eyes, a rather poorly chiselled biggish nose, a sensual mouth and a shock of very long coarse black hair. He became most assiduous in his attentions to Georgie Dupre, which no one else noticed, as the other women were too busy cooking, sewing and tending children, to figure out if a Frenchman's wife was spending too much time with an Indian decorator.

Fisher Fox was always over his day's work early, though there were probably no Unions

in his day. So when Bernon Dupre came back at night from the chase, he always found his wife sitting demurely in the shadow of his wagon. One morning Georgie met Fisher Fox climbing down from his roost, and he told her he was heading for a certain mountain top to dig some more paint rock. She asked him when he would be back and he said before sunset, so she begged to accompany him. They had not gone far into the forest when a terrible rainstorm arose, and the Indian led his fair comrade into a cave to escape a wetting. It was cold in the cave, so he built a fire, and they both sat around it to get warm. They became drowsy, and fell asleep, and when Georgie awoke, she was lying in the arms of Fisher Fox.

Strange to relate, she made no effort to break away, and the wily Indian seeing this, held her tighter and tighter. It was a more blissful embrace than she had ever felt from her husband or from any of the boys she had known before her marriage, and there in the cave she momentarily imagined that her cop-

per-colored lover was the handsomest and noblest man she had ever seen.

Love making and time do not run on the same schedule, so when the fire had burned so low that the cave became deadly cold, Fisher Fox had to gently lay her aside, to throw on some more wood. Georgie smoothed out her hair and brushed her skirts, and went to the opening of the cavern to see how the storm progressed. When she got there she screamed loudly, for two reasons, it was pitch dark outside, and a monster black bear, the rightful tenant of the cave, was standing looking at her quizzically. Fisher Fox rushed to her assistance, but the bear, scenting danger, lounged off into the underbrush, where he kept still.

When Georgie saw the Indian she sobbed in mingled French and Seneca, of which Indian tongue she now knew a few dozen words: "You told me I would be in camp by sunset, now it may be day after tomorrow. Heaven alone knows how long we have been in this cave!" The Indian smiled at her, confessed that he had never been so happy

before in his life. This remark sealed the French girl's fate. She elected to remain with Fisher Fox.

She told him that her husband had an awful temper, was always beating the horses and oxen, had knocked down her father, a man seventy years old, and she feared if she went back he would handle her roughly. The fire was again blazing brilliantly, so the clandestine lovers returned to it, and remained another indistinguishable period.

By this time the rain had ceased, and the sky was clear, so they started in the direction of the main camp of Chief Wolf's Pathway, at the base of the North mountain. They expected a friendly greeting at least, but the great warrior flew into a passion when he saw his artist appear with the attractive French girl. He did not mind the girl so much as the fact that Fisher Fox had left the grand painting unfinished, and under circumstances which looked as if it never could be completed. He vented his anger by ordering the couple out of camp, and sent two giant braves to escort them to the river

and provide them with a canoe to go down stream.

There was no use of Fisher Fox protesting that the settlers living on the shores would shoot him if they saw him paddling down stream with a white girl, it was a case of run the risk, or die instantly. Where the "Shamokin Dam" was built many years later, the canoe was in readiness, and Fisher Fox and his pretty sweetheart, with enough provisions for ten days, were put in it and shoved into midstream. All went well and no one noticed them until they were below the present town of Liverpool. Another terrific storm arose and the frail canoe was tossed about like a chip.

Fisher Fox was a careful steersman, but was no match for the revolving currents. Sometimes they drifted near to shore, other times they barely grazed the jagged rocks in the centre of the river. Georgie was thoroughly alarmed and kept praying, but no one in peril ever took an escapade more coolly than the curious visaged Red Man. Once when they were drifting towards shore the

canoe was swept under the overhanging branch of an enormous elm tree, which hung far out over the water.

Quick as lightning Fisher Fox grabbed it with both arms, and swung himself up on it, as the canoe swept underneath. It did not take Georgie long to note the cowardly act, and to realize she had been deserted in the "big river" in a tiny boat. She tried to grab at the branch, but was not quick enough, and was soon out of its reach. Fisher Fox called to her, with that treacherous voice, so noticeable in Indians. "What a foolish looking picture you make, all alone in that canoe, aren't you ashamed of yourself?" Then he ran along the branch, "shinned" down the massive trunk, and disappeared up the bank.

The canoe, with its hapless occupant now drifted to the centre of the stream, towards where two mammoth stones raised their swarthy heads. There is a narrow channel between, not wide enough for a boat to pass. "If I strike one of those rocks I am lost; if we head in between, I'm saved," shouted the poor girl in a frenzy. Fortune was with her,

and the diminutive craft headed straight for the narrow opening—and stuck fast. Georgie had a hard task to climb up one of the slippery rocks, but she succeeded. There she seated herself, utterly exhausted.

She wanted to lie down, but was afraid that she would fall asleep and roll into the angry river. It was very painful to keep awake all night, but the next morning the sun came out, and there was a brisk wind from the northwest, the “Keewaydin” as the Indian called it. Two Germans, armed with guns, were strolling along the shore watching for birds that might have drifted in with the storm. One of them spied Georgie sitting on the rock so glum and disconsolate.

“Oh, Balzer,” he shouted, “dere’s a giant sea bird, watch me shoot it.” But Balzer had keener eyes than Johann. “Dot’s no sea bird, dot’s a woman!” Balzer looked again, his friend was correct, and with the imperturbability of their race, they walked leisurely for two miles to where their dugout had been “beached” and pushed up stream and rescued the grateful castaway.

X.

VINDICATION OF FREDERICK STUMP



NOTICED in one of your 'Mountain Stories,' said old Aaron Swartwout, "that you speak of Frederick Stump as 'a hardened wretch,' and accuse him of the cowardly murder of many Indians. In the first place he was my ancestor, and I would naturally stand up for his memory, but apart from that he has been slandered in every history of Pennsylvania, and needs a defender. Instead of being a murderer he was a peaceful settler, although after he had punished some Indians for fiendish conduct, he was much persecuted by them, and by many of the whites, to whom the crafty Red Men had persistently misrepresented him.

"Stump, in early life, was a great admirer of Indians, but almost from the outset he

became embroiled with them, and their hatred of him was as intense, as his former love had been strong. He cleared a fine farm in the Middle Creek Valley, and was developing into a personage of some political importance when his final trouble with the Red Men took place. True enough, he had already been in a dozen skirmishes with Indians, and had had his thumb bitten off in a hand to hand conflict near Fort Augusta, but in the Middle Creek Valley he lived for five years without having a word with any of the tribesmen.

“He had a favorite nephew, Balzer Minnich, who, though a rough-looking individual, brutal and illiterate, had obtained a beautiful wife in the person of Georgie Dupre, a woman well-known in Colonial history. He had saved her life from drowning, and out of gratitude or perversity, she went to live with him. She had another husband, but he had disappeared while hunting for her after she had eloped with an Indian named Fisher Fox. She was amazingly beautiful, clever, and full of life, and her child by Min-

nich was considered the handsomest infant 'in the five counties.'

"Stump gave them three hundred acres of land by the creek, some five miles from his own home, and in a wild locality. Minnich worked hard to clear it, and had built a comfortable homestead. Some of the fields were on the other side of the hill from the house, and he would go out in the morning to work in them, leaving his wife and child alone. Georgie was an expert shot, and one night when an eleven foot panther got on the roof, she opened the door and shot it between the eyes as it attempted to jump down on her. She had a coat made out of its hide, with the part from the skull as a cap, and it was a becoming outfit, the yellow tawney skin showing off to advantage her jetty black hair, laughing hazel eyes, and clear complexion.

"She was literally afraid of nothing and her horsemanship was proverbial. She had ridden the winner of a race from Swinefords-town to Selinsgrove, a distance of ten miles, through the woods, over logs and creeks, al-

though after the finish, Otetiani, her pony, dropped dead.

“One October afternoon, while her husband was away and she was shooting wild pigeons as they alighted on the tops of the original pines which stood across the creek, she thought she saw an elk moving among the laurels. She aimed as carefully as possible, and fired, but a human cry of terror made her realize that she had been unintentionally gunning for a man. The next minute a squatty figure in Quaker costume appeared on the bank, and, the water being low, waded over to where she stood. He had kept his face to the ground, but when he looked up she saw it was none other than her old lover, Fisher Fox. He had abandoned her in a canoe in a flood in the ‘big river,’ so she was angry enough to kill him on the spot, but he threw up his hands and plead for mercy, when she made a move to shoot.

“‘Please forgive me,’ he cried, ‘I am in fresh and terrible trouble. I accidentally killed a respectable Quaker gentleman and am escaping from Harris’ Ferry in his

clothes. I came here by accident only, I assure you, and if you will spare me and not tell any white men, I will go my way and never return.' Woman like she dropped her threatening attitude, and the Indian moved by the cabin, which he peered into, and, perceiving the infant in the cradle, passed into the wood beyond, without another word.

"To see that he meant no mischief Georgie followed him a few minutes later, but she could detect by his footprints that he had gone straight ahead. Not caring to dig up the past with her husband, she kept mum on her disagreeable visitant, and the next day Balzer went as usual to his clearing job across the hill.

"A month passed uneventfully and the incident was forgotten. Frederick Stump had become very fond of the child, who had been named for him, so one sunshiny morning Minnich started on horseback to take the little chap to spend the day with him. Georgie, surrounded by her dogs and guns, remained at home, as she had often done before. Late in the afternoon she decided to

take a rest, and bolting the door, stretched herself face downward, as was her custom, on a bench, and was soon asleep.

“The crack of a gun awoke her, and she turned around, and peered out through the window, only to see her favorite hound dragging himself towards her with blood flowing out of his mouth. Before he reached her another shot resounded, followed by the piteous yelping of her other dog. She knew the Indians were after her, so she jumped from the bunk and trained her musket for the approach of her enemies. The wounded dog was crouching outside, but was too weak to bark.

“In about five minutes she heard noises at the back of the cabin, first there were footfalls, then a crackling and sputtering, which told her the cowardly Red Men were setting it on fire, in order to ‘smoke’ her out. She vowed then and there to die in the ruins rather than give up, but she hoped to have a shot at her tormentors before all was ended. The flames soon began to eat a hole in the stout wall, but she never budged. This ex-

asperated the Indians, and one appeared around the corner and started to look in the window. Georgie caught him where she had hit the panther, and death was instantaneous. His fate showed the others that she was not coming out, so they resolved to 'storm the castle.'

"Protecting themselves with slabs from the woodpile, they 'rushed' the door, which though ribbed with iron bands had to give way to the combined strength of four sturdy savages. As it fell in Georgie fired, but without effect, and the crowd overwhelmed her. She fought like a tigress, but they wrenched her gun and knife away and in the struggle all her clothes was torn off. The biggest Indian choked her until she was black in the face, and then slipped a gag in her mouth.

"After she was thus subdued, the big fellow rushed her out of doors, but none too soon, for a final gust of flame engulfed the whole cabin and it was soon in ashes. Outside he whistled loudly, while he was binding her arms securely. Georgie recovered her

senses gradually and her first impression was the horrible one of seeing Fisher Fox still clad in his Quaker habilaments, appearing from the woods where she had first heard the gun shot. She was so incensed, she almost burst the gag in her mouth, and struggled with her pinioned arms until the ropes ate into the flesh.

“It was no use, she was only a captive, bound and without clothing. When Fisher Fox came near he began to laugh in his high, falsetto voice, and put his arms around the helpless woman and began kissing her. Then he said, ‘Come along, dear, we will be always together from now on.’ She would not stir, so the other Indians grabbed her shoulders and dragged her forward. She let herself fall again and again, rather than move an inch, so they picked her up and carried her through the forest, taking turns. They must have gone about five miles up the creek, when Fisher Fox said they would pitch camp for the night.

“It was a foolish thing to do, but some of the other Indians had been getting tired and

cold and grumbled loudly. As his authority over them was not very pronounced, it was hard to do otherwise. Georgie was unconscious from cold by this time, so a big fire was kindled, and she was laid by it to thaw out. When she opened her eyes, Fisher Fox was by her side, and began asking her if she would love him again. She shook her head violently, and closed her eyes, so she could not look at the monster. It was no use, for he shook her roughly, bawling out shrilly for an answer.

“The enemies of Marshal Saxe say that he persecuted Justine Favart because she would not reciprocate his love, but that was not a circumstance to the arrant brutality of this rejected Redskin. At last he could restrain himself no longer and screamed: ‘If you will not love me, I’ll have you tied to a tree and lashed until you do.’ He had hardly gotten these words out of his mouth when two powerful, bearded figures emerged from the laurels. They were Balzer Minnich and Frederick Stump.

“The latter had returned to spend a few days at the Minnich home. Finding the house in ashes, the dead Indian and signs of a struggle, they tracked the party through the snow, leaving the baby tied in a basket on the back of one of the faithful horses, and guarded by one of Stump’s giant bear hounds. Minnich rushed forward with an oath and grabbed Fisher Fox by the throat. When he downed him he began to carve him into ribbons with his hunting knife.

“Stump was on the other three Indians, who were thoroughly frightened, and knocked them senseless, one by one, with the butt of his musket. Then he cut their throats and piled them in a heap. The Indian women who were encamped nearby, cut their own throats and one butchered her child so as not to fall into the hands of the whites. Minnich left Fisher Fox to slowly bleed to death and covered Georgie with his coat. She again became unconscious, and he left her by the fire, while with Stump he surveyed the bloody job. ‘We must get rid of these bodies,

or the sight of them will kill the girl,' said Stump.

"Minnich stamped on Fisher Fox's dying face until it became a jelly, and then joined his uncle in carrying the corpses to the bank of the creek. There they knocked a great round hole in the ice, and threw the bodies down it, as if into a sewer.

"By this time Georgie had recovered again, and was refreshed to see no signs of the recent tragedy. With Minnich carrying her, they started in the direction of the burnt cabin. On the edge of the clearing they came to where they had left the baby, finding him asleep and safe.

"Georgie felt so happy after her adventure, that she leaped on one horse with the child, while Minnich and Stump mounted the other. It was now nearly daybreak, and in a couple of hours they were landed in front of Stump's big log mansion.

"All the neighbors were informed of the burning of Minnich's cabin and the attempted abduction of his wife, and heartily approved

of the summary disposal of the dastardly Indians.

“But the affair was not to end so pleasantly. Early in February there was a heavy snowfall and grand sleighing. Minnich and Georgie, with their child, took advantage of it to return to Berks county, where her father, Jacob De La Planche, had a plantation at the foot of the Blue mountains. It was fortunate they did, for the breaking up of the ice in Middle Creek brought ten gruesome, mutilated corpses into the Susquehanna below Selinsgrove. The local authorities, wishing to please the Indians, determined to make an example of the ‘murderers.’

“Frederick Stump was accused, and to shield Georgie and her family from further trouble, took all the blame on himself. He was thrown into prison, but a determined mob of sympathizers broke down the jail, and he was carried away on their shoulders in triumph. Feeling was so strong that he was not re-arrested, but he left the Middle Creek Valley and moved into Franklin

county, later being joined by Georgie, her husband and son.

“But a stain was put on his name that grew deeper with the years. After his death it exceeded all bounds, and persons who waxed sentimental over the wrongs of the Red Men used him as a ‘horrible example.’

“It is as hard to change history as the course of a river, so many worthy men are eternally damned by it. While Frederick Stump had his faults, he was not a cold-blooded murderer, even of Indians; he merely checked a cruel plot against a defenseless woman, and set an example to all other Red Men, similarly inclined.”

I told old Aaron Swartwout I would be glad to make use of this story some day, even though I knew that history would not be changed a jot by it. It was a satisfaction to hear this story, and have a prejudice removed, for, like many students of Central Pennsylvania history, I had always regarded Frederick Stump as a monster of inhumanity. Even in his remote day it was probably true that “a good Indian is a dead Indian.”

XI.

THE CROSS ON THE ROCK



HAVE you ever seen the cross on the rock?" said the old half-breed. I had several hours of a wait before me at Keating station for the afternoon train, east bound, and the acquaintance with this aged native had promised to pass the time very pleasantly. I had never even heard of this "natural wonder," so I asked where it was, and if we had time to go and look at it.

"I begged the contractors, when they were building the railroad not to destroy it, and they let it be, but I call its preservation a miracle," he added. "Yes, we can go and see it, it is not far up the creek." So I left the party of trainmen who were sitting on the platform of the freight house whittling the planking with their sharp case knives, and accompanied the Indian along the newly-



THE CROSS ON THE ROCK

graded railroad which follows the West Branch in the direction of Clearfield.

It was not a long walk, and I felt amply rewarded for the effort. The rock, high and massive, rises from the right-of-way, and on its side is a perfectly proportioned cross, cut deep into the strata. "Who could have done that?" I inquired. "The early French pioneers, or rather one French missionary, a priest, did it," said the half-breed. "He tried to convert the Indians hereabouts to Christianity, over two hundred years ago. He had striven for weeks to convert them, but they were a wilful and superstitious lot, and defied him until he carved that cross. Then a catastrophe occurred, in which the missionary and most of the natives lost their lives, at least that's what I've heard from the very old people. The early inhabitants of this point, where the West Branch and the Sinnemahoning come together, were an independent tribe; they claimed allegiance to none of the surrounding Indians, and by victorious wars proved their right to self government. They

were lighter colored than Indians generally, and some of them had grey or bluish eyes.

“They claimed descent from European sailors who had come to the American continent a thousand years ago. In this they were probably incorrect, as their religion had nothing in it that savored of the old world beliefs—ancient or modern. They had a multitude of divinities and were always adding new ones to the list; also discarding older ones who failed to answer their prayers. A religious revival had taken place among them shortly before the coming of the French missionary.

“Several of the leading warriors while on their way to a buffalo hunt on what we now call the ‘barrens’ saw to their amazement a most beautiful young woman, wading in the river at the mouth of Trout Run. She wore a flowing cloak made from the spotty hides of fawns and trimmed with gauzy draperies as fine as spider webs. The morning sun shining on her hair, gave out a glint of rich gold, and the same tint was very noticeable in the lustrous dark eyes. The Indians for-

got the chase and started to follow her, but she always kept far enough ahead so that they could not catch up to her. Her way led up the run, and every now and then when she passed through an opening made by a windfall, the sun would gild and glisten on her beautiful hair and eyes. As one man, they called her 'Golden Glow,' and, completely fascinated, followed her to the creek's headwaters. There she disappeared, but they found themselves in the midst of the largest herd of buffaloes they had ever seen. There were thousands of the animals bellowing and running about among the tall trees. Interspersed with them were considerable numbers of moose and elks, while deer were too plentiful to be worth noticing.

"Every Indian in the party had been to this hunting ground previously, but never had game shown itself there in such abundance. The brutes seemed anxious to be slaughtered, so the hunters turned in and killed them by the hundreds. They were weeks in gathering together the hides and drying the choicest meats, and built heavy

sleds to draw them down the mountain at the next snowfall. Before they departed there was an unusually early snow, and they got all their sleds into the valley without an accident.

“When they met their tribesmen they started to tell of their wonderful fortune, but their friends were so anxious to tell of the strangely beautiful maiden they had seen in the river—and how the fishing and hunting had been better than they had ever heard of it—that they refused to listen. To emphasize the good fortune, a tribe of Indians who had been at warfare with them for some years, came and voluntarily surrendered, giving themselves into servitude.

“Before anything of a favorable nature would occur ‘Golden Glow’ was always seen in the river or on a steep hillside, or resting under a beech tree near the council house. She never answered when they spoke to her; she disdained gifts they offered her, and no one could get within a hundred yards of where she stood. The older gods having been far less generous, were discarded root

and branch, and the worship of 'Golden Glow' substituted.

"She was so beautiful that all the young braves aspired to the priesthood, a calling that had in the old days been decidedly unpopular. The handsomest braves, after much rivalry, were selected, and practiced their rites with dignity and reverence, but the mysterious divinity did not deign to notice any of them, although she often appeared to them when at prayer or chanting hymns in her praise.

"She was the most accommodating divinity imaginable, for she always seemed to answer their supplications, and could be actually seen, even if her face did not betray any emotions at the homage paid her.

When Father Ernest Laborde appeared at the confluence of the two rivers he met with the first serious obstacle that had confronted him in a career of over ten years in the wilderness.

"Here was a tribe of Indians entirely satisfied with their religion, having a tangible divinity who was beautiful to look at, and

who invariably favored their supplications. Of course he disbelieved that anyone had ever really seen her, for he had prayed as fervently as any, and knew others even more devout, yet none had ever heard so much as the rustle of an angel's wing. Gently, though firmly, he tried to persuade the Redskins that they only saw their divinity with eyes of faith, that not being material they had never actually seen her, in the sense that we see a rock, a tree, or a bird.

“Every member of the community, old enough to reason had seen her, and no amount of argument could convince them otherwise. If this Christian faith possessed divinities that would come and live in their midst and grant such bountiful favors, they might listen, but let Father Laborde first adduce some of his proofs. The good priest had brought a delicately carved cross of rosewood, and one calm evening, feeling so discouraged, that he was on the point of leaving, he built a stout foundation of stones and mud and set the cross on it. He was only thirty yars of age, well proportioned and at-

tractive looking, and failure rested heavily on his impetuous soul.

“From a worldly standpoint the conversion of these masterful Indians at the ‘meeting of the waters’ meant much to him. If they were converted the French trading company had planned to erect a formidable blockhouse in the neighborhood, and he had been promised the largest parsonage in New France if he succeeded. While meditating before the cross, his mind wandered to the beauties of nature around him. The river rippled at his feet, gilded here and there by the glint of the dying sun as its slanting rays poured through the vistas of tall pines, hemlocks and beeches. All manner of wild flowers were in profusion, and even a few frail blossoms — like women’s eyes — lingered among the shining leaves of the laurels. The moss was like a velvet carpet under his feet, the sky was like a fresco at Versailles.

“Occasionally he heard the rattle-like cries of the kingfishers or halcyons as they darted close to the water, or the somnolent croaks of the ravens flapping lazily back to roost

high up in the mountains. His eyes finally rested on a pool of dead water, where night herons were congregated in unusual numbers.

“From the way they flapped their striped wings and opened and shut their large beaks, he felt something was to happen. He forgot all about his task, so intently was he watching the comic antics of the birds. He felt a breath blow in his face and as he looked around his cross tumbled out of its foundation, and lay broken on the rocks. Back of him stood the slender figure of a young girl, clad in a flowing gown made from the hide of a fawn, with the golden rays of the dying sun gilding into rich tints her lustrous hair and thoughtful eyes. For an instant he presumed her to be one of the Indian girls, but from her attire and queenly grace his heart told him she was the river divinity ‘Golden Glow,’ who had brought such blessings to the savage community where the waters joined.

“Their eyes met, they both smiled, it seemed as if they had surely been acquainted before. He would have spoken, but she walked by him and the great flock of herons

hopped up and surrounded her. With her feathered companions she disappeared among the laurels back of the pool. When she was gone he looked at the fallen cross, it was broken into twenty-four pieces, and was beyond repair. It was growing dark, so he returned to his tent, where his sleep was filled with dreams of the divine 'Golden Glow.'

"In the morning he cut several ironwood poles and fashioned a new cross much stronger than the delicate piece of rosewood that had been so easily shattered. That afternoon he put it in place where the other had stood. Nature was just as entrancing as the day before, and despite himself he fell to admiring the wonders about him. A troop of deer, many of them with half-grown fawns, were splashing idly on the edges of the pool. He felt a breath, like a zephyr blown across meadows from cool woodlands, he looked around, the ironwood cross fell to the ground, and was hopelessly smashed.

"The beautiful young girl was standing pensively by the stream; their eyes met, they

smiled as if in recognition of old acquaintance; she moved on and was surrounded by the deer and passed into the forest with them. He looked at his cross, it was broken into twenty-five pieces; this sturdy ironwood was as shaky as rosewood. That night he dreamed even more of the river goddess, but in the morning he took two gun barrels and welded a cross that he was sure would last.

“Towards evening he planted it in an extra strong foundation, and fell to meditating before it. His eyes wandered to the edge of the pool where a long, tawney panther, was stretching itself and yawning. He was not afraid of anything, and the sight at close range of this titanic beast fascinated him. Soon a second panther, larger than the first, peered through the laurels, and cat-like began to lap up water in the pool.

“In a few minutes he heard a slight scratching and cracking of dead branches, and a third panther crawled down from one of the tallest white pines. A fourth, the largest of all, rose up from behind a rotten log along the bank, and before long the number

of this savage coterie had grown to twelve. Later six cubs joined them, and frisked in the presence of their sedate elders. He felt the same sweet breath blown beside his face, the cross toppled over and lay broken into dozens of pieces on the sharp rocks. His eyes rested on the mysterious divinity. She looked more beautiful this evening than previously, if such a thing were possible. Their glances were followed by smiles and, to his amazement, he saw her lips move, and she spoke to him in the Indian tongue: 'My religion is living and real; come, leave those crosses and follow me into the forest.'

"He started to follow her, and was within a few steps of where she stood encircled by the panther families, when the force of old traditions, old customs, old beliefs, overcame him. He stopped short, and the beautiful divinity 'Golden Glow,' with her strange escort, was gone in the gloom of the forest. He returned to his tent, and all night the question agitated him, should he go with her, that is if she ever appeared to him again, should

he give up the beliefs of his fathers and adopt this apparently potent faith.

“Then he would weaken and think of his brothers and sisters at home, their respectable name, the rewards that his nation promised if he Christianized unwilling savages. He saw himself an archbishop, the friend of kings, in a marble palace; his ascetic training had neutralized the value of merely a beautiful companion in the wilderness. As the dawn filtered in through the crevices in the tent, a new idea seized him. He would cut a cross in the rock which the mystic goddess could not blow over, and struck by the impregnable strength of his faith, he would convert her, and maybe she would be the greatest woman in Catholicism since St. Genevieve.

“With a hammer and spike he repaired to the quiet nook where his crosses had been, and in the huge rock which rose above the bank he chiseled a cross of noticeable size. Then he fell to meditating, as was his wont. On the opposite side of the pool a solitary wolverene was lying on the rotting log; he

could not help watching it, with its wide-open, unwinking eyes, so crafty and yet so still. He felt a breath of indescribable sweetness blow past his face, the cross on the rock remained inviolate.

“He thought he heard a sigh like a breeze among birch leaves; he looked, and the divinity, ‘Golden Glow’ stood beside him. He felt her blow her breath again. He fancied he saw tears in her eyes, which grew larger and larger. They assumed the proportions of a vapor, and soon she was lost to sight in a white fog which filled the entire vicinity. He called to her, but not even an echo answered.

“With difficulty he started to find his way back to his camp, but the air became so thick that it seemed as if the forests were on fire. True enough, they were, for great tongues of red and purple flames shot out of the timber on both sides of the river. He heard a snarling at his feet, and dimly made out the form of the solitary wolverene. When he reached his tent the flames had surrounded the whole Indian encampment, and the terrified Red Men, with their families, were

crowding into canoes and starting down the stream.

“His first thought was self-preservation, but as he started to get in his boat, the wolverene sprang at him viciously. Unarmed, he tried to tear the animal off with his powerful hands, but he was losing time, while the flames were drawing closer. As he finally shook loose from his tormentor, a horrible form rushed at him from the blazing underbrush. It was Wheel of Rivers, titular chief of the local Indians. His naturally calm face was contorted with passion and hate.

“‘You with your new religion, have destroyed the river goddess. We know you have, for we never had a forest fire while she was with us;’ with that he struck Father Laborde to earth with his war club, and leaped into the empty canoe. The flames were now darting across the river, and it was too late to escape. Wheel of Rivers drifted stoically into the fiery curtain and was never seen again. Most of his tribe met similar fates, but a few who got away earlier, floated down the river to places of safety.

“But the young priest’s mission had been accomplished in a way; when the French built their fort at Grande Point, some years later, their most dangerous foes were no more, but thousands of acres of burned waste showed the area of their domain. The cross on the rocks, blackened a little by the fierce flames, remained inviolate, a symbol of the faith and people who were soon to make the region a white man’s stronghold. The river goddess never reappeared, her fair soul had faded into nothingness with the disappointment of her fiery baptism.

XII.

THE FATE OF GEORGIE DUPRE



HE Bald Eagle Mountain below Pine Station, Clinton county, is high and steep, and one would imagine that on reaching the summit a similar declivity would be met with on the other side. But it only slopes down for a comparatively short dis-

tance until it broadens out into a stretch of flat upland, which in turn gradually rises into another mountain almost as high as the Bald Eagle. This "bowl" between the two ridges is called the "Little Valley," because it is so much smaller than the valley of the Susquehanna, or even Nippenose Valley. But it is more of a plateau than a valley, although the early settlers who named it preferred titles to be simple, rather than geographically correct.

Despite its isolated position, settlement of the Little Valley was made almost as early as the West Branch, the first houses having been constructed probably in 1769. The pioneers were Balzer Minnich and his wife, formerly Georgie Dupre. She had been previously married to one Bernon Dupre, who disappeared eight years before in the forests near Picture Rocks. In the interval she had been in many adventures with the Indians, which she seemed to enjoy, as she urged her husband to leave a fine farm in what is now Franklin county, to try frontier life again in Central Pennsylvania.

They left their seven-year-old son with Minnich's uncle, the celebrated Frederick Stump. Besides the Minnichs, the other settlers in the Little Valley were Leopold and Gaspard Huyett, two young men from Berks county, and cousins to the adventurous Georgie. Minnich had objected to returning to the wilderness, but he was a dull German, and was so devoted to his attractive wife, that he finally consented.

When the party reached the Little Valley they were agreeably surprised; the water was good, the soil rich, a particularly fine quality of yellow pine—suitable for building—abounded; it was used in the construction of gun-boats in the Civil War nearly a hundred years later. It was the watering place for herds of elk, deer and buffaloes, which had been driven from their former winter quarters in the other valleys, by the advent of so many white settlers. There was another reason why they liked the Little Valley. The Indians had made it an "open ground," that is to say, the tribes in Sugar and Nippenose Valleys agreed to only approach its southern, and the West Branch Indians resolved to come only to its northern limits, as the result of a great peace treaty between the warring tribes 15 years before.

Both factions agreed on instant death to any Red Man found crossing the "dead lines." White Men might have boundaries of imaginary width, but the Indians required them a mile wide, so that no one could be tempted to renew hostilities by shooting at his old-time

enemies across an invisible demarkation. All went happily with the four settlers, and by September of the year of their arrival had made a respectable sized clearing. The two houses were set on solid foundations, as Leopold Huyett was a stone mason by trade. They killed enough elk and buffaloes to have kept them supplied with dried meat for years, and sold several hundred buffalo hides to a Scotch-Irish trader established near the present site of Jersey Shore.

Provided with money and all the necessities of life, they looked forward to a winter of ease. The Huyett brothers contemplated a trip to Berks county in search of French wives, for these Huguenots were very clanish, and seldom married outside their own race. On one of those sultry, overcast afternoons so characteristic of the early part of September, the Minnichs and Huyetts were sitting on comfortable benches in front of their cabins, all, including Georgie, smoking their pipes. Occasionally a yellow-leaf would flutter down from a birch tree, or a belated scarlet butterfly flit past, but nature

seemed to be in an introspective mood before taking on herself the gorgeous habilaments of autumn. It was like a religious person's last prayer before the carnival.

Georgie's eyes happened to glance upwards in the direction of the Northern mountain, and on the summit she detected something red moving about among the giant pines. She leaned over to her husband and whispered to him, and he looked in the same direction. He pointed out the objects to the Huyetts, and then all spoke out in low voices: "Those are Indians." They did not wish to appear alarmed, so continued lolling on the benches smoking.

Afternoon softened into dusk, and Georgie laid aside her pipe and began to prepare supper; night fell, but no sound of the Indians came to their ears. Leopold Huyett was left on guard at the door as a precaution, but he must have fallen asleep, as the wily Indians crept upon him so easily and cut his throat and scalped him. They pushed in the door, and were upon the three sleepers before they could seize their weapons.

In the darkness Minnich and Gaspard were stabbed and scalped while Georgie was throttled and carried off a captive. She must have been almost strangled, for she did not "come to" for a number of hours. When she did, she saw she was being carried up a run, which she recognized as the McElhattan, having visited the pioneer Simeon Shaffer and family who lived on its banks but a week before. It was no use to cry out, as that meant death, and ignorant of what really occurred, she was hoping that in the excitement her husband had made his escape.

The captors approached the high water fall near the headwaters of the main run, at the foot of which the Indians had cleared a space of about 50 acres. A strong circular stockade had been built over the top of the falls, which gave the Red Men an excellent view down the stream. Back of it, where the ground was level they had cleared and burnt off probably a hundred acres, so they were well intrenched against sudden attack.

But building a stockade was a step backward in Indian warfare; whenever they imi-

tated the white men they were defeated. It was only when they fought from behind trees and ambushed their foes, that they could be counted as equal adversaries.

The captors, bearing Georgie, climbed up a steep path at the right side of the falls, and at the landing were met by Chief Ho-non-wah himself. He smiled grimly when he saw the pretty white girl, and pointed to a room in the blockhouse where she should be placed for safe keeping. One of his henchmen unbarred the heavy oaken door, and Georgie was borne inside and seated with her back leaning against the wall. Her hands and feet were tied, but she was glad to be out of the clutches of the burly savages. They went out, slammed and barred the door, leaving her in the darkness.

After her eyes had gotten used to the gloom she noticed a crack in the log wall, which let in a little light. It helped her to see that another bound captive was in prison with her. He was a large heavy-set man, but she could not judge his appearance, as

he had a ten-days' growth of beard, and his eyes were closed, being fast asleep.

After an hour he woke, rubbed his eyes, uttering a suppressed cry in French as he did so. Her fellow-captive was none other than her former husband, Bernon Dupre. Georgie was equally surprised, but not agreeably. She knew that Bernon had several scores to settle with her, and she loved her present spouse, Balzer Minnich, very much.

She pretended not to notice him, but the Frenchman talked so loud that she had to answer for fear of attracting the attention of the Indians outside. The diminishment of the streak of light in the crack in the wall told the prisoners that day was waning.

When it became totally dark Bernon rolled himself over close to where she sat, whispering to her that he intended to free himself in a few minutes, and would take her along if she would go with him as his wife. He said he had heard long ago that she was alive and happy and nothing could be better than she bestow some of this happiness on him, her rightful husband. Georgie shook her

head, bobbing about her masses of naturally curling black hair. Further than that she would take no notice of him. Bernon made a long entreaty, but as women are never given to pitying men they hate, his eloquence was wasted.

Tiring at length, the Frenchman began to put into effect his plan for freedom. There was a sharp stone imbedded in the ground, and he laid his entire weight on it, using it as a saw to cut off the leathern bands which held him. It was a slow process, but in two hours he was loose. He came over to Georgie again, begging her to go away with him. She turned her pretty head away in contempt. The prisoner lost his temper, grabbed her by the hair and slapped her face until she lapsed into insensibility. Then he untied her ropes, and stood her on her feet against the wall. He moved cautiously to the door, armed with the heavy rock pried from the floor.

Desperate to the point of demoniac strength, he threw his weight of two hundred pounds against it, which had to give

way. As he plunged through the opening, Georgie, in a semi-conscious state, toppled forward and fell on her face. The Frenchman used the rock to brain the sleepy Indian sentry, and got as far as the stockade wall, which he attempted to scale. With one leg over, another Indian watcher shot him in the back, and he fell, breaking his neck, and dying instantly.

A horde of furious Indians rushed to the prison, finding Georgie on her knees, muttering to herself incoherently. Seeing that she was unbound, and thinking she had only held back through fear, one of them rashly struck at her with his tomahawk, inflicting a horrible gash in her breast.

In the midst of the uproar, Chief Ho-non-wah, wrapped in a red blanket, pushed his way to where Georgie was lying, with the blood from her gaping breast soaking into her thick black curls. He took her in his arms, and held his hand to close the wound. In her dying breath she told him she had not wanted to escape, that the other prisoner

had unbound her, and had tried to compel her to go.

Evidently the great war chief believed her, for he held her tenderly, calling her his "little brave," until her naturally white face grew green with death. He laid her on his blanket with her dainty white hands folded, and loudly called for revenge on her slayer.

The other Indians, to save their own necks, indicated the rattle-headed murderer, so he was seized by the giant Ho-non-wah, who first cut out his tongue, and then severed his windpipe. But the poor Georgie must have had some regrets at dying in the arms of an Indian chief, after detesting the entire race for so many years.

XIII.

BILLY ANDERSON'S GHOST



FELT considerably relieved on hearing that the forest fires last spring had swept across the late Billy Anderson's clearing back of McElhattan Mountain, and completely obliterated his deserted mansion, for I knew that then his unquiet

spirit would be at rest.

"Billy Anderson's Ghost" was a familiar figure at sundown, wandering about his briar grown, brushy gardens, and quickening his step when the sound of horses' hoofs approached, either from the direction of Pine Station or from Sugar Valley. It would stride out to the garden gate, and wait until the carriage came into full view, then sigh, and turn its back and walk away with unsteady step until lost among the briars and

brambles and twisted cherry trees at the far side of the garden.

An impressive apparition was Billy Anderson's ghost, dressed as it was in a heavy black broadcloth suit, cut after the fashion of 1850, wearing a wide brimmed black slouch hat, and carrying a massive gold-headed cane. The pale face was almost hidden in the bushy growth of white beard. During his long life (he was over eighty when he died) old Billy was known as a well-dressed man, that is from mountaineer standards, and for the greater part of his days he always quit work in plenty of time before sundown to wash carefully and garb himself in his suit of heavy black broadcloth. Then he would wander in his garden, pricking up his ears at the sound of a carriage, and watching for its approach along the narrow mountain road.

He never paid any attention to a prop-timber wagon or paper-wood truck, his ears were so attuned to the different sounds of the horses' hoofs and the rumble of wheels. But he was always on the lookout for sur-

ries, buggies and carryalls. These crossed the mountain infrequently, especially at sundown, except during the camp meeting time at Pine or Booneville. After his death his unsatisfied spirit displayed the same discernment in vehicles, only to a still finer degree, never noticing the approach of the same turnout a second time. The peculiar patter of each individual hoof, the rattle of each set of wheels, and the squeak of each pair of springs seemed indelibly printed in his ghostly mind.

When he was alive, and the same rule was maintained by his spirit, he never came out on stormy evenings. Of course if a late wind blew back the clouds after a shower and disclosed the pale gold afterglow, or if a single flare of cerise along the mountain top betokened the last effort of the sun to assert itself at the close of a lowery day, he appeared, but on nights when there was rain, or snow, or sleet, all was dark about the weather-beaten mansion.

Despite the fact that it had been empty for over ten years, the old house retained its

signs of solidity and completeness, that made it noted as the most pretentious structure on the mountain when it was built, over sixty years ago. It was the first house on the mountain to have a central hall, discarding the old custom of two separate front entrances side by side which led into the living rooms which were joined by doors within.

Built of the best white pine and white oak lumber, of a quality almost impossible to obtain these days, it would have stood for centuries had not the fire effaced it in its uncheckable course. Most every stranger who passed by the mansion wondered why anyone would invest so much money in such a lonely region. Some few called it "Anderson's Folly" at the time it was built, but its impressive outlines, standing half hidden in a vast orchard of old apple trees, its panoramic background of evergreen-clad mountains excited awe rather than ridicule in those who saw it.

Few were aware that it was a love story which caused the construction of the house, and the clearing of so much land, and the

planting of so many hundreds of fruit trees. When Billy was twenty-one he came into a "fortune" of five thousand dollars left him by an uncle for whom he was named. This uncle had been a merchant in Philadelphia, and Billy was the apple of his eye.

The young man's two older brothers were not mentioned in the will, and they confided to their father, a very prosperous farmer at Dunnsburg, that it was discouraging to see one of the family possessing more money than the others. The father to appease them promised to leave all his property to the older boys; to this the "heir" acquiesced, and peace reigned in the family. Billy had become quite a noted horseman through his ownership of a colt called Sea Turtle, which had an unbeaten record in Central Pennsylvania. He raised the animal himself, the sire being an imported English thoroughbred owned in Jersey Shore, which was said to have won the great Derby stakes in Epsom.

One Fourth of July there was a patriotic celebration at Jersey Shore, probably accelerated by the recent victories in the war with

Mexico, and a championship horse race was included on the program. Horses representing Williamsport, Sunbury, and Shamokin were entered to race against the up-river champion Sea Turtle.

The race was twelve miles, from the town building to the "half-way house," six miles distant, and return. It was "go as you please," but most of the jockeys kept their mounts at a trot. Sea Turtle ridden by a small colored boy named Smiles won by half a mile, and his right to the championship was established.

Billy's family being very religious felt keenly the notoriety brought on them by the young man's interest in horse-racing, and begged him to give it up and settle down to farming like his brothers.

After many discussions he gave in and bought from his father the three hundred acre tract of land back of the lower mountain at McElhattan. It was a wilderness in those days, but Billy put up a small log cabin and set to work to make it "blossom like the rose." Having capital he was able to make better

progress than his neighbors on the mountain, and after six years of conscientious effort he had a nice farm cleared and fenced, hundreds of fruit trees started, commodious farm buidings and a good line of live stock. He had never thought much about getting married, but when his family saw his prosperous looking estate, they began to urge him to find himself a wife.

This was a dangerous proceeding, as it often results in the staid single man marrying an uncongenial person just to settle the matter, or else his long-pent-up emotions are apt to suffer to the utmost if the object of his sudden adoration fails to reciprocate. Early one winter, after farm work was finished, he yielded to an invitation from one of his aunts to visit her in the Lykens Valley, where she had a large farm on the banks of the Wicanisco Creek.

It was a comfortable place, a square stone house with a red roof, an enormous bank barn, and two hundred acres of rolling meadows, here and there interspersed with groves of stately oak and walnut trees.

There was good society in the neighborhood, and Billy, despite the fact he was nearing thirty and had seen nothing but hard work for the past six years, soon began acting as gay as any of the boys of twenty. Most of the entertainments were in some way connected with the churches with which the valley teemed, and to the present generation might seem far from exciting.

Still, to the young man from McElhattan mountain, it was like a true taste of the "big world." The Presbyterians were giving a church supper or sociable one evening in January. It took place in the Sunday school room, a vast high-ceilinged, high-windowed, long-shuttered apartment back of the main edifice. Trestles with boards across were the improvised tables, and pews had been dragged in to seat the guests. Billy escorted his aunt and two of his girl cousins to the affair, and as they entered the lamp-lit room all eyes were turned upon the young stranger.

The valley was still far enough off the beaten path to make the advent of anyone

from a distance a novelty, especially a person on pleasure bent, as most visitors came to trade horses, buy cattle, sell jewelry, or preach a new gospel.

Billy felt embarrassed and did not lift his eyes as he passed along the tables, and took a vacant seat by the side of his relatives. He remained silent, and downcast for several minutes, until his aunt caught him by the coat sleeve to remind him that one of the waitresses was standing by patiently to take his order for supper and whispered to him that his cousins were very hungry. He looked up at the pretty black-eyed waitress, who recited the list of refreshments, and he ordered everything like a true "lavish stranger." He was about to drop his eyes again, but instead glanced across the table, and his love story had begun. There sat directly opposite him—he often thought in the future how queer it was he hadn't noticed her sooner—a beautiful blonde girl attired in a red silk dress.

Accustomed as he was to the sombre dark eyes and pale faces of the girls in the moun-

tains, with their dull calicos and worsteds, the dazzling loveliness of this young beauty, with her gray-blue eyes, rosy complexion, profusion of golden hair, and that marvellous red dress, seemed entirely different and superior. He looked at her so intently his aunt sought to save embarrassment by speaking to the lovely girl, whom she seemed to know well.

She introduced Billy to her, saying "Bonnie, this is my nephew, Mr. William Anderson from Clinton county, about whom we talk so much; he is here on a visit; you must help make his stay pleasant." Bonnie replied that she was only too glad to do all she could, and hoped that his cousins would bring him over to her home soon to spend an evening. The balance of the time at the supper passed off famously, and the young blonde and her mother, and Billy and his relatives were the last to leave the table. The young couple parted on the most cordial terms, and Billy was all smiles the entire distance home.

“But I forgot to ask her last name, I was so excited,” he said to his aunt after they had gotten into the carriage.

“Why her name’s Bonnie Orwig,” she answered; “she lives at that fine farm just before you come to Elizabethville; her father is the most successful farmer in the valley; her mother was a McCamant, one of the oldest families in this county. She’s only eighteen years old, but she graduated last year at the head of her class from the Locust Hill Seminary at Chambersburg.”

“And she seemed to fancy you a lot,” chimed in one of the cousins.

In this happy frame of mind, he always called it the happiest night of life, Billy retired. In the morning he was the first downstairs, and all day long blushed and smiled whenever the name of Bonnie Orwig was mentioned.

A couple of days passed before the promised visit to the Orwig home materialized; it seemed like an age to the young man, even though the anticipation kept him keyed up to a high pitch of joyfulness. There was a new

moon, and the air was crisp and frosty, when Billy and the girls emerged from the comfortable mansion and started in the sleigh to make the call. He looked over his left shoulder, and made his wish; everything boded well for the future on such a clear, invigorating night.

Bonnie was in the cheery sitting room when they arrived, looking dainty and charming in a white satin dress and greeted them most cordially. After fifteen minutes of general talk the cousins withdrew and went upstairs to see Bonnie's mother, so the young lover was left alone with the beautiful being.

When the girls returned, and it was time to leave, things had progressed very favorably. That Billy was in earnest was shown when he refused to discuss the question further than that he was "making satisfactory progress.

At the end of three weeks the young couple announced their betrothal, and both seemed very much in love. Billy outlined his plans for the future to his beloved, and she was deeply interested in everything he told her.

He would return to Clinton county, and build a suitable house, modeled after her own home, and when it was finished she could come there with her father and see it; her father, she had once said, took a trip up country every June to inspect some timberland he owned in the Seven Mountains, and he would travel down with them and then they would be married.

All this seemed ideal, and sort of assuaged his grief at the parting. When he got back to the farm he set to work with redoubled energy, and by the time the frost was out of the ground, had in readiness all the masonry for the foundation and lumber for the construction of the new mansion.

The thought of a woman is the force that arouses the best energy in man; it makes the artist create immortal paintings, the jockey ride to victory, and the raftsmen steer safely through perilous currents. With Billy Anderson it caused the construction of a garden spot in a wilderness. By the first of June the outside of the house was completed, and painted, some of the rooms even had been

plastered. Flowers were planted in the front yard, and gravelled walks laid to all corners of the garden, the yard and garden being enclosed by neat whitewashed picket fences.

A continuous correspondence had been going on between the young couple, and Billy delighted telling his sweetheart every detail of the progress of construction and improvement. In mid-June a letter came from Bonnie saying she would arrive with her father "about sundown next Wednesday," which was five days from the date of the letter. They would drive all the way from her home behind her father's new pair of road horses. Billy was overjoyed, and on the appointed date, just at the last moments of the Golden Hour, when the afternoon sun was beginning to set behind the western mountains, he emerged from the mansion, clad in a brand new suit of broadcloth, and carrying the goldheaded cane Bonnie had given him as a keepsake when he had fitted the betrothal ring on her finger the day he left the Lykens Valley.

Sunset came with all its indescribable glories, its tints deepened, shadows fell, dusk crept into the fence corners and patches of timber. The whippoorwill began its plaintive melody in the hollow. Billy waited all the while by the gate, but not a sound could he hear of an approaching vehicle.

After the last streaks of light had disappeared from the sky, and darkness prevailed, he turned disappointedly and spent a couple of hours wandering in the young orchard at the back of the house. He hoped he would get a letter the next day, but his hired man returned from the postoffice empty handed. He dressed himself that afternoon, and waited at the gate until dark.

This he continued to do for several weeks. Sometimes he would be thrilled to hear the sound of hoofbeats and the creaking of wheels on the stony uneven road. He would quietly open the gate and step outside until it came into sight, then he would turn away wistfully and sadly.

One evening while he stood by the gate a carryall drew up, containing his nearest

neighbor, Amos De Vow, who handed him a letter addressed in a trembling hand. He thanked the neighbor and strolled to the back of the yard to read it, as if some instinct told him it contained bad news, and he must be alone to receive it.

The letter was from Bonnie Orwig's mother, and told how she had eloped with Jacob Braunfels, a young drover whom she had met but twice, the night before she was to start on her visit to her fiance. She had written home from Philadelphia asking to be forgiven, adding that her mother should notify Billy of her act. The reasons she gave were "Jacob is younger and gayer; the more I thought of Billy, the firmer I became convinced he was too serious-minded to make me happy."

It seemed an unsatisfactory reason, but the unhappy lover figured out that his years of toil back of McElhattan Mountain had probably crushed out most of the sunshine in his soul—now the rest had gone. Next morning he was hard at work, and none of

the hands guessed anything had happened, though he rarely smiled again.

Every clear afternoon, as if in the vain hope she would yet come to him, he would attire himself in his broadcloth suit, soft hat and carrying the gold-headed cane, take a walk around the gardens, admiring nature in all her beauties, and dreaming of past joys. Unconsciously he would pause and listen every time he heard the sound of an approaching carriage. He kept at work all through his long life, and but for his solitary stroll at sundown lived the life of the other men of the mountain. His housekeeper found him dead in bed clasping to his heart a faded daguerreotype, the portrait of a fair-haired girl. And then the released spirit took up the vigil until the forest fires "removed the ancient landmarks."

XIV.

THE DREAMER



HE could easily see that the new hand on the sawmill was not an ordinary sort of individual. Physically he was a great, broad-shouldered, sandy-haired man, and a match for the biggest of the loggers or mill-men, and intellectually he seemed cast in an unusual mould. Gloomy and taciturn, it was extremely difficult to become acquainted with him, and he seemed to be more at home with the lumbermen than with those on a level with him through education.

A man like this is apt to have something to conceal, which made us all the more desirous to be friendly with him. At the back of the main framework of the mill someone had rolled a large hemlock log close to the structure, and there he would sit by himself on the still summer evenings smoking a briar-

wood pipe. He was always meditative and still, even when the rest of the crew grew hilarious over their card or quoit games.

For some reason or other, he was well-liked by all the men, despite the fact that he never took part in their sports, and his conversation with them seemed infrequent. We inquired of one of the teamsters, who had worked in the woods all his life, if he knew where the new man, who called himself Bernard Carroll, had come from, and were surprised to have him say that Carroll and he had worked together on another lumber job in Nine Mile Hollow in Potter county, seven years before. He was, therefore, not a new-comer to the lumber woods, although the last man to hit the job at this particular camp.

“He drinks a lot at times, and gets quarrelsome,” said the old teamster, “and don’t be surprised if he goes to Lock Haven some Saturday night and never comes back; that’s the kind he is. He has a love-scape on his mind, and no man’s worth a curse that has that eating into him.”

This quickened our interest in the big silent man, and several times we passed by where he was sitting on the log, and wished him a cheery "good evening," hoping to draw him into a conversation. He replied in a perfunctory manner, and there was nothing to do but to pass on.

On the evening before the Fourth of July we were driving across the railroad tracks at the Pennsylvania station, in Lock Haven, and noticed the big fellow waiting for the down train which was then over an hour late. We signalled to him, and he came up to the buggy, with such alacrity that we offered him a ride to camp. His mood evidently was different, as he gladly accepted the invitation.

The night was warm, and "Bonnie," the little black horse, pretty well fagged, consequently most of the distance was made at a walk. This gave us a splendid opportunity to become acquainted with the "man of mystery." We had recently had a love story ourselves, and the afterglow on the Bald Eagle Creek, the broad, well-tilled valley, and the Allegheny mountains beyond, brought back

the train of sentimental memories, and infused them into the conversation.

Our talk had already become more or less intimate when the big fellow remarked sadly that this was the nineteenth anniversary of the one great disappointment of his life. "We ought to forget such things, but they grow keener and more alive with each passing year."

"Really," he went on, "I botched up my life in wonderful style; it may be too late now, but I had not strength to shake off the sense of error at the time it occurred."

"I was born in Baltimore," he continued to reminisce, "forty-two years ago last May, and for the last twenty years have been knocking about doing most everything, mostly trying to forget. I always was impulsive, and from the first my impulses were wrong, and led me through a zig-zag, unsatisfactory course. My father sent me to the University of Pennsylvania, where I joined the best fraternity, and was soon the centre of a gay crowd who had plenty of money to spend. In those days I used to look down at

the class of people who are my only associates now. I well recall one autumn afternoon I heard shots fired near my father's country house on the Eastern Shore, and how I hurried down the lawn in time to find two lads, they had been in the class below me in college, shooting rabbits in one of our fields. As they did not belong to a 'swell' fraternity, I did not think much of them, and I drove them off the estate, using some pretty harsh language. They were better gentlemen than I, as I look back now, for they never answered me but walked quietly away. Now I recall their pleasant faces, what clean looking boys they were, and wish I could meet them and tell them how sorry I am for my conduct.

"My college days were cut short by an attack of pneumonia following a prolonged debauch, and I almost died. I emerged in a penitent condition, and being the son of good Catholics, conceived the idea of becoming a priest. All my old college friends were surprised, but my mother said she had always felt in secret that this was to be my vocation. I was enrolled as a student in a seminary that

fall, and for several months made amazing progress. My instructors were delighted, especially since I came from one of the most distinguished families in the state, and one old priest patted me on the shoulder and predicted I would some day receive the Red Hat.

I had become very friendly with a fellow student named McCafferty, and went with him to his home in Western Pennsylvania. That was the turning point in my career, though I doubt if I would ever have become a priest. In the town where he lived I met one of my fraternity brothers from the University, and spent more time with him than I did with the hospitable McCafferty. Despite my black suit and high vest, that gave me a semi-priestly look, my University chum was determined I should meet some girls. At first I told him I had 'cut all that out,' but one afternoon, as we were driving through town, I saw a girl I did want to meet. She was standing on the corner, talking to another girl who was leading a child, and the kindly interest the girl I admired displayed toward the child touched my heart almost as much

as her blonde beauty. On one of my college vacations I had gone to Europe, and was joined in Paris by a friend who was secretary of one of our legations. In Berlin I was particularly taken by the fine collection of paintings by Watteau, and there was a figure of a blonde girl in the one called 'L'Amour au Theatre Italien' in the National Gallery, that won my heart completely. I said to my friend, If I ever see anyone who looks like that, I will marry her."

"Well, the girl standing on the corner was the exact counterpart of Watteau's blonde beauty. I am sure she was, for I had stood spellbound before the painting for hours, and now I was studying to become a priest. That night I changed my vest and was taken to call on the exquisite being. I was surprised to find her as intelligent as she was beautiful; she was one of the very few women I have met who expressed original thoughts. Bangs were in style that year, and I will never forget the cute little blonde bangs she wore. She was 'chic' from head to foot, and more like a Parisienne than a dweller in a provincial

western Pennsylvania town. We were together for the remaining time I was in town, and I told her I loved her, and she said she loved me.

“The night I returned to school I confessed to her I was studying for the priesthood, but would drop my course so that I could marry her. She showed her discernment by saying she had guessed that the first time she saw me. After my return to the school we wrote each other every day. All went well for ten days, and then I got a letter from her saying that McCafferty’s mother had told her mother that I was studying to be a priest, and that she had commanded her to have nothing further to do with me. She added that henceforth I should write her to the home of a friend.

“The next day I received no letter nor the day following. Time passed on, several weeks elapsed and all was silence. I became alarmed and trumped up a lie that I must go home, and hurried to the Western Pennsylvania town. I met my fraternity mate and he learned for me that the beauti-

ful girl had gone away for a visit, but he could not learn where. There was nothing for me to do but to return to school, which I did, vowing to forget my disappointment in my clerical studies. But though I came out brilliantly in the mid-year examination, my heart was sad, and I chafed the bonds that were tightening themselves around my young life.

“The climax came when my friend wrote that the girl had returned from her visit. I went to the principals of the school, and announced that after sober reflection, I had decided not to become a priest, therefore must leave the institution walls at once. They tried to persuade me, but it was no use. I got out and bought a suit of dark grey material and started again to try and consummate my romance. It was a fine morning in May as I climbed up the steep hill leading to her home. The robins and larks were singing, there was an odor of sweetness and life from the dandelions and fresh grass.

“Boldly I rang the bell. I had a long wait, but it was rewarded by the door being opened

by the beautiful girl herself. On one of her fingers glistened a solitaire diamond ring, and I feared the worst had happened. We went in the parlor, and I at once explained that I had given up my studies, and, passing through the town, had decided to stop off and see her. It was not long before she told me that she had met a man while on her visit in January whom she liked very much, and having been urged by him and her parents that I was not sincere in my intentions to give up my studies, had become engaged. I felt like saying, 'You should have been willing to go through fire and water for the man you loved,' but I only smiled and didn't.

"After a pleasant talk lasting several hours I said goodbye; she followed me to the steps, and I had to struggle with myself not to ask her to break with her new lover and come with me. It was my fate that I should hold my tongue, and I watched the door close on the only woman I ever loved, or ever will, before I started heartbroken, down the hill.

"At the bottom of the hill was a hotel, and then and there I started on a booze which

lasted a month. After it was over, I went home, but my parents did not relish my changed prospects, and I soon started on my checkered career once more. They still send me money when I write them, but we are practically strangers; my only homes are the lumber camps and second-rate hotels.

“Last night I had a dream which marks the climax of the part of my life I have been telling you. I went to Lock Haven with a view of celebrating the Fourth, but when I got to the first saloon I suddenly lost all my desire for strong drink; I ordered a ginger ale, instead. After supper I wandered around town, and sat until dark on a bench by the dam, watching the river and the sky. I went back to the hotel, but could not drink, and, to escape comments from some of the boys from the camp, went to bed.

“I seemed to fall right away into gentle slumber, although my room was above the bar, where there was a terrible racket. As sleep deepened I felt myself transformed from the shaky, wooden bed, the summer night, and the narrow room with its one win-

dow; I was in a comfortable upholstered easy chair by the side of an open grate, in a large, high-ceilinged room, with cases of books that reached from floor to ceiling. It was winter time, and there was no other light in the room except what came from the ruddy coal fire.

“Twilight became dusk and the street lamps were lit as I sat and meditated. Instead of my woodsman’s or even clerical garb, I wore a neat dark gray suit; I seemed a prosperous business man and house-holder. I heard a faint rustle, a sound essentially feminine, and upon looking up beheld my lost love, attired all in white, coming through the door from an inner room. The fire had just ignited a fresh chunk of cannel coal, and the glow shone full in her face. Her beauty was maturer and more developed, but I thought I had never seen her looking so lovely.

“‘What are you doing here, all alone by the fireside?’ she said laughingly. ‘Thinking about you, as I always do,’ I replied, naturally enough. She got down on her knees before me and put her beautiful arms around

my neck, and drawing me to her, kissed me on my mouth on the mustache which I wore in the dream.

“ ‘We have been very happy together,’ she whispered. ‘You showed the grandest foresight and courage to take me away that morning. I should never, never have been happy with that man to whom I was engaged. I thought I would never see you again, and was piqued because everyone was telling me how reprehensible it was for a man studying for the priesthood to have devoted himself to me.’

“ ‘Yes,’ I answered, ‘fate decreed I should go after you; I could not have been content to live without you.’

“There were footsteps on the stairs and in the hall, and merry laughter such as can only come from very young folks. The door which was ajar, was opened, and three young people entered, two boys and a girl; all were very tall, very slight, and very handsome. The boys were probably twenty and eighteen, the girl sixteen. Exact counterparts they were of their beautiful mother, especially the girl,

except that her hair was darker than that of their mother's and more the color of mine.

The girl was the first to speak, saying gayly, 'Oh, papa and mamma, what are you doing there in the dark?' 'Repeating our love story, as we always do,' was my lost love's quick reply. The young folks grouped themselves about us and started to tell of an entertainment out at the Univeristy, (the dream was evidently laid in Philadelphia), to which they intended going after supper. My heart thrilled with pride as I saw on the boys' vests the familiar blue and gold fraternity badge I had worn so long. They were expecting some young friends to go with them they said.

"In the midst of our laughing and chatting, the electric bell at the front door began ringing, and the boys and the girl jumped up and ran out to greet their friends. The bell kept ringing and ringing; it seemed very strange, and as this thought seized my consciousness, my surroundings changed rapidly.

"Sunlight, the cracked plaster of the walls of a narrow room, a washstand, with the

varnish much faded by spilled water, a trowsled carpet, all these took the place of the cozy fireside, the spacious library, my lost love and the dream children. The bell I heard ringing was in the next room, trying to rouse some sleepy guest to catch the 7.23 eastbound train. I was fully awake when, cursing, he pressed the button as the signal to the office that he was out of bed.

"I was so intoxicated with the joy of my vision that I lay in bed until Elmer, the colored handy man whom I knew well, knocked violently on the door to remind me that I would miss my breakfast if I didn't get down soon. I put in the entire day on the bench by the river-bank overlooking the dam, trying to solve the problem of existence and the meaning of my dream.

"By afternoon I resolved I would make one final effort to readjust my destiny, to put my career on an orbit, like other well regulated lives. I went to the railroad station to take 'Number Six' for McElhattan, where I would collect my belongings at the camp, planning to leave tomorrow morning for Tyrone to

make connections for the town where my lost love lived. Now I will take the 'midnight' for Harrisburg and change there for the West. I will see if I cannot get her to come with me. Perhaps, after twenty years, she is widowed, divorced or unhappily married. I believe that dream meant she would have given up her other lover and gone with me that fatal May morning. I will write you fully how everything turns out, and I'll send you the address where to ship my belongings; perhaps it will be to a mansion on the Eastern Shore."

We parted at the X roads, and we watched the stalwart figure striding resolutely along in the direction of the Pennsylvania station until he disappeared over the grade of the Beech Creek Crossing. Then we turned our horse's head out towards the mountain. For many weeks and months we watched for the letter telling the result of the strange man's journey to the home of his lost love, but, as it never came, had to conclude regretfully that he overlooked us in his happiness or else his high resolve came to naught in some sordid gin mill in Harrisburg.

XV.

THE CALL OF THE TRACK



OME one told Davie Lemmons that there were three running horses at Shook's livery stable, and he sauntered up the alley to take a look at them. It had been ten years since he had worked among the runners, but he felt the same old en-

thusiasm returning as he neared the stables. It was a bright Sunday morning, in the early part of March, and although patches of badly discolored snow still lingered along the backyard fences, there was an unmistakable aroma of springtime in the air.

Davie was a fashionable negro boy, and had dressed for the occasion; no churchman attiring himself for a special service could have taken more care. He wore a green suit, a red tie, a black derby hat with three white buttons on either side, and black patent

leather shoes with yellow buttons. Three brindle bull-terriers of his own breeding preceded him up the alley.

There was a crowd already around the stable door, but he soon singled out Nevin Shook, the proprietor's son, and tipped his hat to him respectfully. He had begun to tell him "how he used to be a jockey," when a tall lean man with a heavy mustache interrupted, to ask if he understood exercising. This was rather a slam at his boasted prowess as a "pigskin artist," but it was an opening wedge, and, answering in the affirmative, he followed Shook, and the tall man to the rear of the stable.

The man explained that his exercise boy had disappeared while the freight car lay on a siding, and he needed someone right away to help him out to the fair grounds with his string. Of the three animals, two were small bay fillies, three years old, called Elsie W., and Belle of the Pier, of no particular class, while the third was an aged entire horse standing about sixteen hands, also a bay with a white face and named Calvados.

Loudly expressed admiration, even from the colored boy, evidently pleased the tall man, for he opened the door of the box stall, and seizing the big horse by the halter led him out on the stable floor. He was such a beautifully turned horse, with such a blood-like head, and flashing eye, and so gentle despite his abundant spirits, that Davie remarked he looked different from any race horse he had ever seen. "I thought old Belisarius a good looker, and Grand Prix, and Inferno, and old Fernwood, and Gonzales, but, gee, this is a picture horse."

The tall man smiled and said "There's no horse ever raced in this country that has his looks or manners, except perhaps it was Go-Between, the great suburban winner. This horse looks different because he is a French horse; over there they demand good looks and manners, as well as speed." Then he let go the halter, and told the horse to go back to his box; which he did obediently.

“I picked him up last fall at a farmer’s vendue. It is a funny story. When the track down at Bennings was in the height of its glory, they used to have races ridden by army officers, which made a big hit. It was suggested that some time they have a private sweepstakes for horses owned and ridden by members of the diplomatic corps.

“There was a young chap in the French Embassy who had an older brother, Count de Caen, visiting him, when the subject was discussed. The Count became enthusiastic and declared he owned a horse which could win the race if he walked the entire distance. But that is my language, not his. He left for the old country soon afterwards, and promised to send the animal to his brother in the Embassy. Before he had landed on French soil Congress abolished racing in the District of Columbia, and the race was forgotten.

“The young diplomat also forgot to cable his brother not to ship the horse, so it was started, according to the agreement. One morning the young fellow received a wire

from the French Consul General in New York that a thoroughbred horse, consigned to him, had just been landed.

"There was nothing to do but to reply saying to ship the animal to Washington. It might do as a saddle horse, he figured. The animal had barely reached the Capital City when the diplomatist got word of his transfer to St. Petersburg, and that dampened his ardor for everything, including horse-back riding, for he had not as yet affixed his American heiress.

"An obliging friend took the horse to his estate near Chevy Chase, until the Frenchman's plans were settled. He sailed unexpectedly, and henceforth paid no attention to his friend's letters as to the future of the horse. Disgusted, the party instructed his coachman to sell the 'stud,' and a neighboring farmer became the purchaser.

"I saw the animal pulling a cultivator; that was too much for me; I inquired his history, and a few months later added him to my string at practically my own price."

“And,” he added, “I’m going to clean up everything on the Fair Circuit with him this summer.” He reached into his coat pocket and fished out some soiled and crumpled papers. “Here’s his breeding, his certificate from the French government, and the record of the races he ran in France. Young Shook and Davie looked at the documents curiously, but they were in a language that was foreign to them. The tall man began to read aloud “‘Calvados, cheval baie,’ that means bay horse, ‘six ans,’ that is, six years old, by Alhambra III, out of Hereuse,” this last word he pronounced as if it was “her aus.” Then he paused, he had forgotten the translation of what followed.

A number of strangers had crowded about the boxes, so the trio moved out to the office, where they continued their conversation around the white-washed stove. As the tall man seemed to take kindly to the colored boy, the upshot of it all was that Davie agreed to give up his position as night timekeeper in the iron works, and become exercise boy,

and possibly jockey with this string of three horses.

When he reached his modest home he proudly told his wife of his new occupation, but she, with a woman's insight, begged him to leave the horses alone. "You know what you were when I married you," she said, "and how ten years away from the track has made you sober and industrious. Besides we have five little children, and they need a father who has a steady income."

But the colored boy was too elated to be affected by his wife's reasoning, and that night handed in his resignation at the iron works. He helped move the horses and outfit to the Fair Grounds, and began his duties with a light heart. It was mostly stable work, as the tracks and the adjacent roads were deep with the spring mud.

The two fillies seemed an indifferent lot, which made the tall man and Davie devote their best efforts to the more receptive Calvados. In due course of time the half mile track dried off nicely, and exercising began. There were a dozen small boys hanging

around the sheds all day long, bidding for the chance to ride. The tall man finally selected two white boys, Adam Wittgenstein, son of a neighboring farmer, and Leo Quailey, who had dropped off a freight car from somewhere. There wasn't any promise given of pay, but the boys were allowed to sleep in an empty box and ate their meals, which were cooked by Davie, with the tall man.

Adam Wittgenstein could have gone home to sleep and eat, his home was so near, but he didn't want to. He had a pretty sister, Eleanor, who came to the stables to urge him visit the folks occasionally. She took a liking to the surroundings, and her visits increased so much that "the folks" began to have trouble in keeping her away. She was a slim, dark girl with prominent brownish eyes, and straight nose, and full lips. When she wore her big hat and tight-fitting black skirt on Sundays she attracted more attention around the stables than the horses.

On Memorial Day there was a day of racing at the Fair Grounds, but the tall man decided not to start any of his string. He

would keep them dark, and wait for the Fourth of July. Davie had become somewhat impatient at the long delay before the first start; his wife had been nagging him for money, consequently he was elated when the door of the box-car closed on the horses and himself on the evening of July first. The two white boys had been left behind, it was too expensive to carry them. They were bound for Huntersburg, a Pennsylvania mountain town, to take part in the races at the "Midsummer Fair."

The weather was grand, and the sun shone as it only can in July. The horses had arrived in prime condition, but Davie did his exercising before daybreak, and few were aware of their abilities. The first running race was scheduled for July third, and was a sort of preliminary, or try-out for the "big race" to be held on the "Fourth." It was to be a half-mile affair, best two in three.

The entries were not printed in the local papers, and until the programs were placed on sale just before the races began, it was hard to guess the numbers or class of the

contestants. Just an hour before the first heat, Davie was strolling along the line of padlocked boxes, tearing to bits as he walked a letter from his wife asking him to send her money. His ears were primed and eyes alert for information when he heard voices back of the sheds. He turned through a narrow alley, and saw a group of young men looking over a high inclosure of whitewashed boards, built out from a shed. He edged up to the crowd and peered over.

Standing in this yard was a stockily built horse, with a cobby head, roached mane, and banged tail, in appearance more like a broncho than a thoroughbred. He was an entire animal, dark brown in color, and stood a scant fifteen hands. "What horse is that?" inquired Davie in the most nonchalant manner he could assume; the query was addressed to the group of young men in general, but none answered.

He was about to move away, when one more kindly faced than the rest stepped over to him and said: "That's the horse which wins the race today; that is Little Christmas,

by Marty B., dam Little Ida, by Tom Bowling, Jr. He won all his six starts on the Fair Circuit last fall, and he'll do better this year because he's now a five-year-old." Davie thanked the kindly youth, and slipped away as quickly as he could. When saddling time came, Calvados, or the "French horse" as every one called him, was like a wild horse. It was all the tall man and Davie could do to buckle the saddle girth. He champed his bit, reared and kicked, and thrashed about with his magnificent tail, until a crowd collected, mistaking his good spirits for viciousness.

While all conceded that the "French horse" would take a lot to beat him, the natives shook their heads, and said the race was a "pipe" for Little Christmas; which turned out to be a local horse. His owner, Simon Hemmig, kept a feed store on River street, and he was to be ridden by Sammy Ziegford, son of the foreman in the town's leading livery stable.

During the saddling of Calvados, Sammy appeared, followed by a dozen admirers. He was rigged out in full jockey regalia, with a

red and blue shirt, but several sizes too large of which he seemed inordinately proud. He carried a whip, and kept striking at the wooden uprights of the saddling shed. He was an ill-favored little fellow, his frame was too heavy to ever make a good rider, and his blonde hair sorely needed a trimming. As he moved away in the direction of the "private paddock" occupied by Little Christmas, he remarked loudly, "That old horse will be getting started about the time I'm dismounting."

The colored boy looked very angry, but as the crowd was "with" the local rider he wisely held his tongue. Davie on the "French horse" was the first out on the track. The big thoroughbred made an impressive appearance as he paraded past the thronged grandstand. There was an "ah" from all sides; they had never seen a racer of his calibre before. He won even the most rabid partisans by his beauty, and they consoled themselves by saying: "What a pity to have a 'bogie' riding him."

The other horses came out presently. They were wretched looking animals, known as Bake House and Laura M., and were ridden by large-sized white boys. Little Christmas did not appear at the starting post for over half an hour after the bell rang, but nothing was said as he was the local entry, and starter and jockey were close friends. When he finally swept up the track, Sammy riding on his neck in imitation of the fashionable jockey seat, with his baggy colors flapping in the breeze, the outfit looked like a ship in full sail. There was tumultuous cheering in the grandstand. Evidently it was all settled that the local horse should win, so thought the tall man who owned the "French horse" as he leaned on the rail. There was a delay of three-quarters of an hour getting them "off," as the starter was determined to give the local horse the best of it. But Little Christmas was a slow beginner and would not break in front. Finally a spectator was called on to hold the "French horse's" head, which was evidently a ruse, while the local horse was gotten into position. When the

man had the bridle tightly gripped the starter dropped his flag, and the field was in motion, with an open gap between Little Christmas and his nearest competitor.

Davie struck the officious party with his whip, he speedily let go, and the "French horse" bounding like a jack rabbit was in pursuit. In front of the stand he was running neck and neck with Little Christmas; Davie was sitting still, but the local jockey was plying his whip. There was a dead silence in the crowd, for reasons mainly speculative, but partly sentimental. Rounding the turn the "French horse" took the lead, and there was a constantly widening space of daylight between him and the local horse as they swept along the back stretch. The silence on the stand became oppressive. It was as if a funeral oration was about to be delivered.

Coming around the last turn Davie eased up the "Frenchman" and allowed Little Christmas to make up a little ground. When they were opposite the far end of the stand, he whispered something to his mount, and the big bay leaped forward with redoubled

speed and crossed the finish thirty lengths in front of the local entry. Bake House and Laura M., struggling gamely, brought up the rear. Lots of the country people were so disgusted at the defeat of their favorite that they immediately left the stand noisily declaring that "running races were no good anyhow," and "it was an outrage to let a damned darky ride a race."

On the course there was a trail of profanity all the way from the judges' stand to the stables, indulged in by everyone from the officials down to the "swipes." The race had not turned out as arranged. The second heat was scheduled to take place after the final heat in the harness races, and the lateness of the hour combined with the unpopular victory of the French horse, left few persons in the stand when the four horses cantered to the post.

At the stables still lingered a large crowd, especially around Little Christmas' box. Sammy was kept busy receiving condolences coupled with assurances that he'd surely win the next heat. One old fellow, a stockholder

in the Fair Association, with a yellow beard that reached to below his waist line, declared he would compel the board of directors to make a rule forbidding colored riders on the track next year. When the bell rang all four horses filed through the gate in good season. Once on the track, however, Sammy galloped his mount beside the "French horse" and, leaning over towards Davie, poured out at him the tirade that a certain type of white men often apply to negroes.

The colored boy only smiled; he was more anxious to win the race than to enter into a fight with his fair skinned rival. The tall man was at the post to see the unfair tactics used at the start of the first heat were not duplicated. He kept his keen Southern eyes on the little pudgy starter, and shouted to him several times when that individual was obviously trying to give the advantage to Little Christmas. After fifteen minutes he saw it was best to let them go, so he sent them off to an even break. It seemed practically the first heat all over again.

The French horse soon had an immense lead, and they galloped on like a procession past the stand, around the turn, and up the back stretch. Turning into the home stretch David laid back in the saddle, pulled Calvados down to a common canter, and with head swinging the big French racer loped along towards the finish. Back of him Sammy Ziegford was plying the whip on Little Christmas like a flail. Davie, who was all smiles, evidently failed to notice the stocky form of his rival creep to his horse's flanks. He heard something panting like an engine, and looking around saw Little Christmas tiring badly, but sticking to it bravely.

In a twinkling Sammy drove his mount with full force into the French horse, forced him out of his stride, hit Davie over the face with his whip, and compelled him to pull down to a walk to avoid falling. Then he plied the whip on Little Christmas and went on and won by five lengths. There was a vociferous cheer from the handful of rustics on the stand, who evidently imagined such a palpable foul would be allowed to go, because

it was in favor of the local horse. Not a word was said by the officials and the jockeys had begun dismounting, as the tall man, white with anger climbed up the winding stair into the judges' box.

It did not take long to convince the brown overcoated would-be sportsmen that they were dealing with a real man, and they instructed the announcer to tell the spectators that a foul had been committed, and the heat and race had been given to the French horse, Calvados. It took a dozen to keep Sammy Ziegford from attacking the judges as they descended from their stand, and he was finally led away vowing vengeance on everybody and everything.

Davie was hooted as he led the winning horse back to the stables, and small boys called 'bogie' while he was cooling him off. After the work was done he locked the stall, and as an extra precaution left it in charge of a friendly Dutchman. He walked down to the railroad station and sent a telegram to his wife. It read, "Won fine race today, am sending money order tomorrow."

He returned to the stables, and after supper, retired for the night in a stall adjoining the box occupied by Calvados. He was feeling happy, for, apart from his victory, he looked forward to the next day, July Fourth, when the big crowds would be present, to repeat the performance. Then, he thought, he would not ease down his mount at the homestretch, but would let him win by a quarter of a mile if necessary. He was not a heavy sleeper, so he easily awakened by hearing someone fumbling with the padlock on Calvados' box. He was up and out in the alley in half a minute.

It was a dark night, but he could make out a human form, a short, gorilla like figure running in the direction of the cow-barns. The colored boy took a chance and made after him, soon overtaking him and grabbing him by the shirt collar. The prowler looked about, and Davie could see he was none other than Sammy Ziegford, erstwhile rider of Little Christmas. "What were you doing around my stables?" demanded the negro. Sammy answered by a torrent of oaths and a vicious

blow, which shook him loose from his dusky captor. He turned and ran towards the stables, but Davie cornered him in an angle of the alley, before he had gone a hundred yards.

Taking a stout grip on the lad he led him to his recently vacated sleeping quarters, determined to lock him in there until morning. As he was shoving him through the door the infuriated white boy spied a pitchfork standing in the corner. Grabbing with the quickness of demoniac fury he drove it through his captor's breast, puncturing his heart and lungs. With a guttural sigh, the colored boy sank down in a heap and was soon dead.

Sammy took some straw, wiped the blood off the prongs of the fork, and stood it back in its accustomed place. He was trembling like a leaf with the reaction from his fit of passion as he closed and bolted the door of the box stall, leaving his victim open-mouthed and hideous, half buried in the straw. Early the next morning, when the tall man came to

the fair grounds, he was surprised to find no signs of life around his stables.

“That ‘smoke’s’ been on a bender last night,” he muttered, as he opened the box which he occupied. There lay the colored boy, almost hidden from view in the straw. The tall man bent over him and found he was not breathing. On the front of his white muslin shirt were three spots of dried blood. That told the story, and the tall man, grim and silent, took a lock from off the wall and securely shut the box.

It was hard to interest the local authorities. “A negro found dead in a box stall,” was hardly worth noticing by the local papers, especially when the Grand Mid-summer Fair was in progress. The colored boy was avenged in different fashion that afternoon. In the presence of the biggest crowd that had ever assembled there, the French horse, Calvados, ridden this time by a white boy, took the “Fourth of July Running Race,” in straight heats from the local horse, Little

Christmas, ridden by Sammy Ziegford, breaking the track record by five seconds.

But poor Davie Lemmons had given up his life in answer to the "Call of the Track."

XVI.

THE GHOST OF THE PINE



LD Hezekiah Gerhard's home was the most conspicuous along the state road. Yet the little square frame house was sadly in need of painting, the outbuildings were dilapidated, and a score of palings were broken or missing from the yard fence. For six months the lower hinge was missing from the front gate. But in the yard grew a tree of unusual size and appearance, which attracted attention for a mile in either direction, as the homestead was situated on a slight rise.

The tree was an old-fashioned yellow pine. We say "old fashioned," for Pennsylvania mountaineers maintain that the true species of yellow pine disappeared about thirty years ago. They were never over plentiful, and were soon wiped out by the lumbermen, for-

est fires, and a small green beetle which made a specialty of boring their bark. None grew in their places, and apart from a few preserved as ornaments in front yards, they may be regarded as extinct, at least so say the backwoods wiseacres.

When old-timers driving along the state road came in sight of Hezekiah Gerhard's home, they invariably called out in surprised tones, "there's a genuine old fashioned yellow pine!" Many stopped to notice and admire the tree, and even forestry officials who would not admit that it belonged to a distinct species, referred to it as "a magnificent specimen of a mature yellow pine."

If you looked it over carefully, its difference from the commonly met with yellow pines seemed apparent. The bark was soft and smooth, and of a bright yellow color, and the needles were almost as long as those of the Southern long-leafed pine, but much darker. The odor from them was very pungent, and could be inhaled at a great distance. This particular tree was devoid of branches for sixty feet, but at that height

sent out several rounds of graceful, upturned boughs, which terminated in the shaggy and glossy umbrella-like top.

How it had been allowed to stand when all its fellows had been demolished half a century before was a mystery. It was even to old Gerhard himself, and he often said he regretted not having asked the reason from the parties of whom he had bought the place in 1865, when he settled there, after four years in the Northern army.

As years went by and so many venerable strangers and young foresters admired the tree, the old man became considerably elated at the possession of this arboreal giant. Before he went to the war he had been a raftsman and his only interest in trees was in their value as marketable lumber. Often as he sat in his rocking chair, under the big tree, on summer twilights, he would estimate the amount of feet of board measure it contained. The figures, which always totalled "seven thousand feet," were probably not a hundred feet out of the way. That gave an idea of the immensity of the tree, especially

in these degenerate days when a portable mill considers it "good sawing" to get even seven thousand feet from an acre of woodland.

He was fond of telling about a German travelling through the country, buying walnut trees, who had offered him "one hundred dollars spot cash" for the giant tree. Sometimes when his wife had spent all his pension money on his daughters and their children, he wished for the return of the liberal German. But generally he would say he wouldn't part with it, "whoever buys the tree must take the house with it." Like most human beings the tree had an enemy. He was Oren Hincks, Gerhard's son-in-law.

Hincks was a loud-voiced, self-important individual, and followed the trade of house-painting in Youngmanstown. Tall and spare, he had chronic indigestion, which caused him to make frequent trips to his father-in-law's country home to brace up his unsteady constitution. He was an habitual complainer, and for a while, despite the frequency of his visits, found fault with everything.

As time went on he centered his spitefulness on the giant pine. "What good is that damn yaller pine, anyway, shadin' the yard, and droppin' needles on the roof." He was always cutting at the bark with his huge case-knife, and when there were leaves to be burnt, he piled them around the base of the tree, badly scorching the roots. He complained that the dampness from its foliage caused the mildewed appearance of the house, whereas the real reason was it had not been painted since 1885.

Old Gerhard hated to spend the money to have the house repainted, though his son-in-law told his wife that it was the old veteran's duty to give him a chance to earn some money. He would often remark at the dinner table, "if you'd cut down that fool tree, I'd paint your house for you. But what's the good doing it now, when all that shade is rotting it to its foundations?" This seemed a convincing argument, especially when so often repeated.

Then, too, when the winds blew at night the topmost boughs had a habit of rendering

a weird cantata of their own. Old Mrs. Gerhard said, it kept her awake, and would join in against the tree with her iconoclastic son-in-law. All these things made their impression on the old man. At first he had valued the tree because strangers fancied it and a German had once offered to buy it for one hundred dollars, spot cash. Now as everyone in his family looked upon it as a nuisance, it had better be removed. But he hesitated, and waited, maybe that German would return, then he would have it cut.

The cantankerous son-in-law when he learned the old man's weakness suggested that the tree be sawed down at once, and the logs peeled and put away in the barn to be seasoned. "By the time that German gentleman returns the logs will be in prime condition; I wouldn't wonder if he'd give you a hundred and fifty." This sounded like logic, and one day the painter entered into a deal with the old man which sealed the fate of the mammoth pine. He would paint the house as soon as work grew slack, for seventy-five dollars, and would wait for his pay until his

father-in-law sold the logs, provided the tree was cut immediately. He never calculated that the logs would be sold, but if the house was painted, and the tree down, somehow or other the old man would be forced to pay him.

The very next morning was set for the execution. A mile further up the road, near where the creek crossed under the new concrete bridge, lived two old woodsmen, brothers named Tom and Ed Jameson. After fifty years of strenuous labor they had retired like ancient mariners to spend the remainder of their days in their snug cottage. Hincks, the painter, induced them to join in the tree felling bee as well as several other younger men who had had more or less experience in the woods.

The fatal day dawned crisp and bright; it was typical of the month of September. A gentle breeze was stirring the long needles in the umbrella-like dome of the doomed pine. Never, it seemed, had the ozone from that lofty canopy been more fragrant or invigorating. As the breeze persisted, the weird cantata, which it so often sang at night, be-

gan; it was as if the tree understood its fate and was chanting its requiem.

First of all the Jameson "boys" as they were called, even though they were both well over seventy, removed the panels of the front yard fence, so as to allow plenty of leeway to the cross-cut saws, and to prevent it being smashed by the limbs of the falling tree. Hincks had the satisfaction of notching it with a brand-new double bitted axe, while the two Jamesons handled the cross-cut. All the neighbors, old and young, were attracted by the excitement, but there were no regrets expressed, as the aesthetic value of trees had never been felt in the community.

It took quite a time to fell the giant, and as the saw grew nearer and nearer to the notch, the canopy-like top was convulsed with audible shudders. At last with a cry from Hincks, "Look out everybody," which sent the crowd scampering in all directions, and an ear-splitting cracking of wood, the tree dropped with a thud that shook the earth. It sounded like the report of a sunset gun

at some fort. In an instant children were clambering over the prostrate trunk.

The Jameson boys lost no time in sawing the part below the branches into four sixteen foot logs. Then, aided by the younger men they set to work cutting the top and limbs into stovewood. "This reminds us," called out one of them, "of 1876, when we was cuttin' cordwood for the Pennsy at Wilcox in Elk county. That's where they have the big tannery that tanned three million buffalo hides."

After several days' labor the job was finished and all the wood ranked for the sake of convenience along the back of the house. The logs were left unmoved and these, with the mammoth stump and vast quantity of glossy needles which fairly carpeted the yard were constant reminders of the fallen pine. The fence was replaced by Hincks, who was elated with his triumph over his inanimate enemy.

After the tree was gone, poor old Gerhard and his wife began to regret it. The afternoon sun was more noticeable than formerly,

they missed the health-giving aroma which emanated from its dark green foliage. In the evenings the old man would sit on one of the logs, leaning on his staff, imagining himself bargaining with the liberal German timber buyer. His wife said she was always dreaming about the tree, and the song it used to sing at night. Her dreams were so vivid they woke her up, but even then her ears rang with the strains of the weird cantata.

Shortly after the first snow fell, which was about Thanksgiving time, Hincks, accompanied by his wife and children, came on a visit to the old people. "I've come to pay you a visit, and paint your house," was his introductory.

That evening he noticed old Gerhard carrying in some oak wood from a shed.

"Ain't you burnin' the wood from that yaller pine?" he queried rather sharply. "No," answered the old man timidly, "we tho't it wasn't dried enough."

"I'll show you that it is," rejoined the painter, and running out brought back an armful of the resonant pine.

It looked dry enough, but when put in the stove gave out such a sputtering and singing that the old man, seated on the woodbox in the corner exclaimed disgustedly "too green." But Hincks insisted, and aided by kerosene, the supper was cooked with the pine wood.

During the evening the wind started, and there was a moaning sound outside which was strangely reminiscent of the pine tree's night song. Old Gerhard and his wife both remarked this, but the son-in-law laughed at them, saying that it was the telephone wires across the road. Every few minutes the old man would become silent and put his hand to his ear, listen awhile attentively and say, "that surely is the old pine back again."

By 10 o'clock he could stand it no longer. He nodded to his wife and said "I'm going out to see where all that moaning comes from; it's no telephone wires." Hincks, with one of his little girls on his lap, was dozing in an arm chair when his father-in-law started for the door. He looked at him angrily, and called to him "what's the use

fussing over telephone wires, ain't you used to them by this time?"

But old Gerhard paid no heed, and, although he was in his shirt sleeves and wore carpet slippers, he opened the door. As he did so a gust of chilly wind blew his white beard about his face. He shut the door after him and moved slowly along the board-walk. The air was cold, but never had it been so surcharged with the odor of the pine.

When he turned the corner of the house he saw a great murky vapor rising from the giant pine stump. He looked at it closely, it was like a spiral column; he followed it with his eyes; it stretched upwards more than sixty feet where it spread out into a vast filmy canopy. From the dizzy heights came melodious cadences, similar, yet truer and sweeter than the humming of the telephone wires across the way. He stood and listened.

It seemed to him like the violin playing of Ole Bull, whom he had heard at his ill-fated castle on Kettle Creek away back in the '50's. He had been hunting elk at the time, and sat on a log on the opposite mountain drinking

in the exquisite tones as they were wafted indistinctly across the ravine.

But suddenly the old man heard an unearthly noise, and felt a shock, as if struck across the face by a blackjack. As he fell, he saw himself engulfed by the hazy vapor which streamed from the stump of the ancient yellow pine; it was as if he had been struck down by a spectral windfall. He became senseless, and death soon relieved him.

Inside the house Hincks enjoyed his nap before he became aware that old Gerhard had been absent a long while. The old wife had felt apprehensive ever since he went out, but feared to speak lest she disturb her son-in-law. "Where's Gran'pap?" said the painter, suddenly, as if returning from some distant land. When told he had gone to look into the strange noises outside, he jumped up and hurried out, muttering "that old fool ought to be in bed."

In the front yard an awful sight met his gaze; there lay the dead body of the poor old man, with his face mashed in as if by a blackjack. "Murdered by tramps," was the only

thought that crossed the excited painter's mind. And that was the verdict, also, of the coroner's jury.

But wasn't it peculiar that after that night the strange melodious murmurs were heard no more about the little home? The telephone wires still hummed when the winds were high, but they were so unmusical and commonplace in comparison. And the pine wood burned in the stove as if it had been seasoned for years; it ceased its wingeing and sighing as if retribution had satisfied it.

XVII.

A PENNSYLVANIA BISON HUNT



UFFALOES were plentiful in Central Pennsylvania until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when all, excepting a half dozen stragglers, were slaughtered in a single week, two men being responsible for the extermination of what was a distinct species of these noble animals. The Pennsylvania bison were more closely allied to the wood bison of Canada Northwest, than to the buffaloes which once roamed our western plains.

Pennsylvania bison grew to enormous size, were darker, and their hair curlier and crisper than the buffaloes we know. On account of living in a mountainous country they did not carry much superfluous flesh, and their long legs made them agile runners. In the summer time they could be found in

bands of about a dozen individuals grazing on the high plateaux and on mountain sides where new grass had come up after the forest fires.

In winter they congregated into vast herds and descended into the protected valleys where they dug out the grass from under the snow, and during storms huddled together for mutual protection. They had a habit of following a leader, and if this brute moved in a certain direction the rest followed, often to the peril of the entire herd. As the years went by, and the country became more closely settled, their range grew more limited and their numbers decreased.

By 1770 no bison were seen in the West Branch Valley, as twenty years of relentless trapping had made them too wily to approach that region. They still penetrated the valleys to the south, however, but were never left unmolested. When the new century began there were bands aggregating five hundred animals scattered over all the highlands between Middle Creek and the southern edge of the Bald Eagle Mountains.

These wintered together, as in years past, their assembling place being generally some rocky height in the Seven Mountains. Their method of assembling was curious. The leader on reaching the chosen spot would commence an incessant bellowing, which would be taken up by the first bull within hearing, and sent on by him to the next, and so on, until all had received the signal to get together for the winter. Then they would begin to troop in the direction of their chief, whom they obeyed implicitly.

This was the pioneers' favorite time to hunt them. They would wait along the buffalo paths which stretched across the valleys, and over the mountains, and lucky were the bison who reached the rendezvous. Despite this, the completed gatherings presented a formidable appearance, and would have caused consternation to a modern hunter.

The winter of 1800-1801 was unusually severe, and the buffaloes were driven to dire straits to keep from starvation. Hunting had become so persistent that they hesitated to come down permanently from their retreats

in the Seven Mountains. They made forays into Penn's Valley, Stone Valley, Poe Valley, and Middle Creek Valley, but every time retreated with unsatisfied stomachs and sadly decreased numbers.

During a spell of thawing in January, 1801, the carcasses of a dozen aged bulls and cows were found in the Bear Meadows. In the latter part of that month was a blizzard of unprecedented severity. The famine-stricken buffaloes forgot their fears, and one night moved in single file down their old-time path to the valley of Middle Creek.

A backwoodsman who saw them counted three hundred and forty-five in the procession, and probably a score of stragglers followed in the course of the next few hours. They were led by "Old Logan," a coal black bull of immense size, which seemed to the settlers to have a charmed life. His spacious sides were scarred with bullet marks and wounds left by attacks from wolves and half of his tail was missing.

The pioneer who counted the procession of course took a shot at the big fellow, but

his gun missed fire, and on examination found it was out of order. That ended his hunt for the day, and he had to content himself with recounting his experience, without having a trophy to show for it.

At daybreak the buffaloes were at the foot of the mountains, gazing out over the dreary, snow-buried valley. There was a log cabin occupied by a young man named McClellan and his family about a quarter of a mile below where they were huddled together. The hardy young pioneer espied the brutes and lay in wait for them until they got into motion again and filed down the hollow of the stream which flowed from the mountains into Middle Creek.

When they reached a point opposite the cabin they were surprised by a fusilade which laid low first one, then a second, then a third and a fourth of their number. More would have fallen had not the hunter directed so many volleys at "Old Logan." His impenetrable hide rolled off the bullets and he ambled away grunting amicably.

Four buffaloes before breakfast was a good bag, and the delighted nimrod set to work skinning them, and cutting out the choicest portions of the flesh, giving his most careful attention to the tongues. The four carcasses proved to be those of young cows, the meat of which was most highly prized, and there was less to leave to the wolves and ravens than had the victims been old bulls.

Half a mile below where they had been ambushed the bison fell into better luck. Martin Bergstresser, a recent arrival from Berks county, had cleared a nice-sized farm by the creek, and his first season's hay crop, a goodly pile, stood in the lea of his big log barn. It was needed to give feed for the winter to a number of cows and sheep, and a team of horses of which the former Berks countain was the proud possessor. The animals were sidling close to the stack, when they scented the approaching buffaloes, and commenced lowing and bleating with terror.

Led by "Old Logan" the famished herd broke through the rail fence, and crushing the farm animals beneath their mighty rush,

were soon making short work of the hay-pile. Bergstresser was cutting trees nearly a mile away when the stampede occurred, and if he had not heard the bellowing of his live stock, the screams of his wife and daughters would have brought him back. He dropped his axe, and picked up his gun, hurrying over stumps and rocks to the scene of the onslaught.

Like his neighbor, McClellan, he singled out "Old Logan" as his first object of attack, but it was wasting ammunition. His eldest daughter, Katie, a girl of eighteen, brought out a fresh musket, and shot two large buffaloes, which excited the herd so much that they turned away from the stack.

At this juncture McClellan appeared and shot two more. Evidently the animals possessed a strong communal feeling, for when they saw their companions kicking convulsively and covered with blood, they set up the most pitiful groaning imaginable.

"Old Logan," who had been more worried by the pioneers' dogs than by their bullets, saw the time had come to move, and striking a trot, led his party out of the barnyard and

up the creek. When they had gone it looked as if a cyclone had swept across the premises.

The barn was standing all right, but the fences, spring-house and hay stack had gone, and six cows, four calves and 35 sheep lay crushed and dead among the ruins. Luckily the horses were safe and sound in the stable, although one had become so excited he got cast in his stall, and was rescued barely in time to save his life.

McClellan lingered around a couple of hours, helping what he could to repair damages, and offering his sympathy to all the Bergstressers. Then he started homeward, but when he got within sight of his clearing he uttered a cry of surprise and horror.

Three hundred buffaloes were snorting and trotting around the lot in which his cabin stood, being so numerous that the house was obscured by them. Boldly the pioneer rushed through the roaring mass, only to find "Old Logan" standing guard in front of the cabin door. Too terrified to reason correctly, he aimed his musket and fired, tearing an ugly hole in the big bull's throat.

Enraged by gore and pain, the monster wheeled about, and plunged headlong through the door of the cabin. Being their leader, the herd were accustomed to follow him blindly, so when he disappeared into the cabin the rest strove to do likewise.

Vainly McClellan fired his musket, and when the ammunition was exhausted, he drove his knife into the beasts' flanks to try to stop them in their mad course. Inside the cabin were his wife and three little children, aged five, three and one year; at least they were there when he started on the hunt a few hours earlier, and he dreaded to think of their awful fate. He could not stem the tide, and the brutes continued filing through the doorway until they were jammed in the building as tightly as wooden animals in a toy Noah's Ark.

No sound came from the victims inside; all he could hear was the snorting and bumping of the giant beasts in their cramped quarters. The other bison outside stamped their hoofs, moaning with disappointment. Seeing he could do nothing more, he was about to go

back to Bergstresser's for help, when he saw his neighbor and three other men, all carrying guns, coming out of the woods.

They had heard the noisy animals a mile away, and formed themselves into a posse. McClellan signalled them to remain where they were, and ran towards them. They held a hasty council of war, deciding that the only thing to do was to tear down the log cabin, in the hope that perhaps some of the family had hidden in a corner, and were still living.

Two of the men ran back to the Bergstresser home for axes, and while they were gone the rest climbed into trees, amusing themselves shooting buffaloes. When they returned, accompanied by Bergstresser's wife and daughters, twenty-five dead bison were lying in the lot. The live ones would not leave as long as "Old Logan" remained wedged in the cabin, but remained stupidly clustered around the door.

The five men, armed with axes and with heavy poles for battering rams, repaired to the rear of the shack and began the work of demolition. It had been built to last, but the

determined men soon made a generous opening, out of which the bison, headed by "Old Logan" swarmed like giant bees from a hive.

The sight of the king of the buffaloes with his bearded throat a mass of clotted blood, was too much for McClellan. He seized a gun and shot the brute through the head. The old fellow was slow to die, running bellowing hideously for three hundred yards before he fell and became rigid. The entire herd followed him and surrounded his prostrate form, the air resounding with their moans as they battled with one another to lick his wounds.

The men entered the cabin, and were horrified to have their worst fears realized. On the earthen floor, crushed deep into the mud by the impress of the cruel hoofs, were the remains of the unfortunate McClellan's wife and three children. Strong man of the woods that he was he dropped down in a faint, and it was over an hour before he could be resuscitated.

When he came to himself he was led trembling like a leaf to the Bergstresser

home, and put to bed. It was useless to follow the buffaloes any more that day, as all the men were out of ammunition. They buried the mangled bodies of the family under the earthen floor in the log cabin, walled up the door and the opening that had been made to let out the buffaloes, leaving them to sleep their last sleep in what was so recently their home, but now their mausoleum.

When the bereaved husband and father recovered sufficiently he suggested to Bergstresser that they exterminate the surviving bison. Bergstresser was enthusiastic over the idea, and the two men started on horseback, one riding towards the river and the other towards the headwaters of Middle Creek, to invite the settlers to join a hunt of extermination.

Meanwhile there was another heavy snowfall, but every man invited accepted with alacrity. About fifty hunters assembled at the Bergstresser home, and marched like an invading army in the direction of the mountains. They were out two days before discovering their quarry, as the fresh snow had

covered all the buffalo paths. The brutes were all huddled together up to their necks in snow in the great "Sink" in the White Mountains and the hunters, looking down on them, estimated their numbers at three hundred.

When they got among the animals they found them numb from cold and hunger, but had they been physically able they could not have moved, so deeply were they "crusted" in the drift. The work of slaughter quickly began. Some used guns, but the most killed them by cutting their throats with long knives.

The snow was too deep to attempt skinning them, but the tongues were saved, and these the backwoodsmen shoved into the pockets of their leather coats until they could carry no more.

After the last buffalo had been dispatched the triumphant huntsmen marched down to the valley, singing German hymns. It was a horrible sight they left behind them. Three hundred dead buffaloes stood upright in the frozen "crust," most with jaws broken, and

all with tongues gone, and the ice about them resembled a sheet of crimson glass.

Later in the season some of the hunters returned to see if they could procure a few of the hides, but the alternate freezes and thaws had rendered them worthless. In the spring and summer travellers crossing distant ridges could notice one portion of the sky black with the pinions of huge birds. They were the carrion-seekers, bald eagles, golden eagles, a half dozen kinds of hawks, buzzards, ravens, crows, which picked clean the bones of Pennsylvania's last herd of bison.

Whether they deserved their awful fate because the dumbness of "Old Logan," their leader, caused the trampling to death of a pioneer family is difficult to judge, but they paid the penalty, and their executioners were content to rob posterity of these valuable game animals. To this day the barren flat where the McClellan cabin stood is known as "The Buffalo Field," and on winter nights it is averred that the tramp of hoofs is heard incessantly pounding the hard earth in a ghostly stampede.

XVIII.

McELHATTAN AND HIS SPRINGS



WILLIAM McELHATTAN arrived at the banks of the stream which has since borne his name, in the spring of 1771, and at once commenced clearing a farm.

Before he had gone very far his shrewd Scotch-Irish mind, for he was a native of Derry, perceived the need of a mill in the locality. The water power was inexhaustible, and the growing number of settlers would guarantee a prosperous business. The mill was a well-built affair, and cost more than any structure of its kind in the West Branch Valley.

But he had not reckoned on troubles with the Indians, which would prove such a hindrance to agriculture that at times it seemed as if a mill was superfluous. Being of a friendly disposition and given to joking with

the redskins, he could not see why others were continually embroiled with them.

For a long time after the mill was erected, it was an object of great curiosity to the aborigines. They crowded about the machinery in stolid admiration until it seemed as if an accident would result. Many a white man would have gotten angry and used bad language, or driven them away, but not so with William McElhattan. He encouraged the copper-colored visitors, made them presents of flour, and treated their chiefs to whiskey.

He had such a following of savages that the other settlers said his name should have been "William Penn" and not William McElhattan. He always maintained that his sociability paid and that if the rest had followed the same policy, there would have been no "Great Runaway" with all its attendant losses of life and property. When it came, and all the other settlers fled for their lives from Indian massacre, he held his ground, and was said to have been drinking whiskey with several of the chiefs in the pine grove below his mill while the frightened pioneers

were going down the river in their canoes as fast as the current would carry them.

This earned him the title of renegade, which was undeserved. He merely knew the best way to protect his interests. His nearest white neighbor had resided two miles from him, while his nearest Indian neighbor was located a little more than a mile distant. The flat now known as Wayne township, was pretty well cleared of Red Men even in William McElhattan's time. The old chieftain Hyloshotkee, which translated means Ginseng, had his lodge-house at the entrance to the Gap in the Bald Eagle Mountains, on the campground where the five springs are located.

In an earlier day when Indians were more numerous they camped by the hundreds around the Springs, but with the advance of the white men they had withdrawn to Sugar Valley, where they disputed with one another for the possession of its limited boundaries. But Hyloshotkee hung on partly because he loved the scenes of his youth, and partly because his former fellows had deserted him

for younger leaders. He had five sons, but the four oldest had gone away, leaving only the youngest, Choleesaw, or Pine Leaf, to look after the old warrior and his aged squaw.

Hyloshotkee was from the start one of the most interested and persistent visitors to the water-mill. After the acquaintance had reached the point where he took to drinking McElhattan's whiskey, he came every clear day, and darkness alone drove him off. White men from a distance who visited the mill perhaps twice a year, always noticed the old Indian, and laughed about him, calling him "McElhattan's watchman." He never made any attempt to help, which sometimes angered the farmers when they had extra large loads to be handled in a limited space of time.

After he had gotten to know McElhattan well enough to have confidence in him, he began urging him to come out to the Springs for a game supper. The miller was too busy to be much of a hunter, but he had killed three elks one afternoon which threatened to make havoc in his wheatfield. He had not

attempted to skin them, but strung them up by the hind legs from some trees along the fence-row as a warning to other elks of marauding tendencies. No more elks appeared, but instead the number of ravens and crows grew so tremendous that their croaking and cawing drowned the roar of the water-wheel.

"My son, Choleesaw, is a great hunter," the old Indian would expostulate. "Every afternoon he comes to us with some fresh trophy of the chase; one day it is *chetowaik* or plovers, the next day it is *mushkodasa* or grouse, another it is *wawa* or wild geese, and *sheshebwuz* or wild ducks," This seemed very tempting, especially when he added: "My wife knows how to cook game better than any squaw in all these valleys."

One Sunday afternoon in the early autumn, the old Indian appeared, and explained that his son had shot two buffaloes which were crossing the Spring Run Ridge, and had brought home their tongues as the "*piece de resistance*," but in addition there were a number of grouse, woodcocks, and plovers hang-

ing at the camp ready to be cooked. "We will serve the game with plenty of roasted ears of Indian corn, and potatoes cooked only as the Indians can prepare them."

McElhattan accepted the invitation, and was about to start off with his Indian friend, when his wife called him into the house. She informed him that he must take her and their three children, or remain at home himself. It was not that she relished the idea of being entertained by Indians, but because she was afraid to remain and guard the premises. "If we die, we die together," was her way of putting it.

McElhattan was for cancelling the visit but he could see by the Indian's expression it meant an insult and strained relations, so, trusting to his previous good luck, he started, followed by his wife, daughter, two little boys, and their faithful watchdog, Felix.

The eldest child was a singularly pretty girl of seventeen named Vashti, who apparently had something of the stubbornness of her Biblical name-sake. For a year past her parents had been trying their utmost to

marry her to young Abner Sweeny, son of a prosperous landowner at Fort Augusta. The young man was a great horseman, and, accompanied by his colored servant, made trips every two months to visit the beautiful Vashti and persuade her to become his wife. He was a fine looking fellow, with a heavy mane of red hair, and stood over six feet in height. He had on one occasion brought her a ring with a red sparkling stone in it that was bought in Philadelphia, and he had to do a lot of coaxing before she would accept it.

When she finally took it she carried it in her hand until he had gone, and then hid it away somewhere in the house. When her mother accused her of having lost it she only smiled and said that "a ring from a man you're not in love with is not worth hunting for." All this was a grief to her parents, who were not worldly people in any sense of the word, but sincere and simple Cavinists; their anxiety for the "brilliant match" being founded on the desire to get their promising offspring out of the wilderness into a community where she would have more pleasure

and comforts. They accused her of being fond of first one young man, and then another, as the cause of her indifference to Sweeny, but she pursued the even tenor of her heart.

Wilful as she generally was, McElhattan was surprised when she consented to go to the Indian supper without an argument. She even went to the bit of broken mirror that the miller had fastened on the side of the house for use when he shaved, and smoothed and adjusted her wonderful golden hair. Backwoods girl that she was, she would have attracted attention in any ballroom in Philadelphia, her blonde coloring was so exceptional, and her slender figure so lithe and graceful. Her violet eyes were too small; that perhaps was the only flaw a beauty expert could detect.

When the party neared the Springs they could see thin columns of blue smoke rising from the fires which were built in depressions in the ground blocked in with stones. Over one fire an aged squaw in a green blanket was bending. Over another appeared

the broad shoulders and sinewy back of a young Indian boy, free of clothing to his waist, and wearing a pair of buckskin trousers. His manly bearing gave an air of dignity to a "get up" that would have appeared shocking in most white men.

As they drew near, the squaw, with Indian-like indifference, kept on with her cooking, but the young fellow turned around, his eyes falling full on the beautiful Vashti. His pleased surprise was so great that he dropped the wooden fork on which he was broiling a grouse, and it fell into the coals, sending up an appetizing odor. The young girl seemed to be equally surprised, for she stood still for half a minute gazing at her handsome Indian admirer. Then the formal introductions were made, and the party fraternized as if of one race.

The supper was a great success, especially as McElhattan had brought a bottle of Lancaster county whiskey, which contributed to the exuberant spirits of the older people. To have come upon them suddenly would have made one believe the millenium had arrived.

Choleesaw and Vashti continued exchanging glances, but both being a trifle shy, it was not until the spirit of the Lancaster county whiskey had taken possession of their elders that their acquaintance made full headway.

The handsome young Indian could only speak a few words of English, and Vashti knew about a like number of words in the Seneca dialect, but conversation was forgotten in the ardor of youth. Choleesaw suggested that Vashti go with him to look at his fish pond, and she gladly accepted. A short distance below the Springs he had dammed the little stream which ran from them, and in it he had put many kinds of beautiful fish. Among them were some small silver-colored ones, of a kind Vashti had never seen before. She seemed greatly pleased, especially when the young Indian caught some in his hands, and gave her a close view of them.

Choleesaw saw raccoon tracks leading to the banks of the pond, and became excited, his black eyes flashing with the animation of the true hunter. They followed the tiny tracks some distance back into the forest,

where they lost them. Vashti told her companion she would secure for him the loan of her father's animal trap, and he could catch the furry thief, and lots like him. The shades of evening had deepened in the always dark vale of hemlocks, and Vashti began to feel cold. She rubbed her hands together, which aroused the sympathy of the Indian, who took them in his, and warmed them in his strong grasp. Then he embraced her and kissed her a dozen times before their stroll had ended and they rejoined the merrymakers at the camp-fire.

A full silvery moon was just coming up over the fringe of pine trees on the edge of the mountain, contributing largely to the pretty picture. McElhattan, who was feeling good, was talking loudly about wanting to buy the Springs from Hyloshotkee and the old Indian was shaking his head. When he saw the young couple returning his expression lit up, and he pointed to the fair Vashti, saying in his broken English: "Mister McElhattan, if you give me that young girl for my son, you shall have the Springs." The

pioneer laughed heartily, but made no reply, and the conversation drifted into other channels.

When it was time to return home, the white people expressed their sincere gratitude for the delightful evening, McElhattan declaring it was the happiest night since he had left Derry. He even stood in the middle of the path after the final handshake and recited a poem which he imagined was appropriate. Without waiting to be invited Choleesaw joined the party, leaving McElhattan, his wife and the two little boys lead the way, while he sauntered along back of them with Vashti. By the time the mill was reached, the beautiful girl knew why she had been cold to Abner Sweeny and her other suitors; she had been waiting for her Fate.

The next morning when Hyloshotkee came to the mill, his son was with him. Unlike his father, he appeared anxious to work and helped unload several farm-wagons which arrived during the day. Choleesaw played his part well, strengthening his tie with Vashti daily, but never giving her parents cause for

suspicion. He was apparently always busy and kept his place so well that he cooked and ate his own meals in the pine grove below the race.

The mail carrier visited the locality infrequently, but one day he brought a letter for Vashti. It was from Sweeny, saying he was coming on a visit the following week. Her parents were present when she received it, and there was no use hiding the contents from them. They urged her to accept this grand opportunity to get out of the wilderness and mingle in a world of comparative refinement. But Vashti was stubborn and a poor actress; she told them that she would never marry the prosperous youth, and furthermore this time would hide in the woods when he arrived.

On the morning before his proposed arrival, McElhattan took Vashti by the shoulders and led her to the log smoke-house, which stood at the edge of the pine grove, shoved her in, locking and bolting the door. She submitted without a scene, and her parents felt that, despite her threats, she would relent

when the time came. When they brought in her dinner they found her in good spirits, and she was singing when they appeared with her supper.

She had told her Indian lover that her parents would probably lock her up to prevent her hiding from Sweeny, therefore he was not surprised when he saw from a point of vantage in the mill, her father gently, but firmly, thrusting her into captivity in the smoke-house. He continued his work, and when it was dark said "good night" to his employer, starting ostensibly for his father's camp at the Springs. He whistled to Felix and the dog followed him, wagging its tail.

He did not go very far, but lurked in the woods until the last candle was snuffed in the comfortable McElhattan home; then he stole out stealthily, followed by the faithful dog, emerging from the woods at the rear of the smoke-house. He watched the miller's home until he was sure all were in dreamland, and ran quickly to the smoke-house door. Deftly prying off the hasp he had the lock in his

hand and the door wide open in less than a minute.

Vashti leaped into his arms, and he started for the Gap on a trot, carrying his precious burden, with the faithful Felix bounding along beside. They stopped for a minute at old Hyloshotkee's wigwam to tell him of their safe escape and then continued their journey into the mountains.

Bright and early the next morning Hyloshotkee was at the mill, smilingly wishing a "good morning" to the dejected miller. "Don't look so cross," he said, as well as his poor English would permit, "my son has got your girl, now you are the owner of the five Springs."

The humor of the situation appealed to the Irishman, and he replied: "If it's done, it's done; I'd rather have a smiling bit of land and water than an unsmiling daughter."

In three days Choleesaw and Vashti returned to their former haunts, and were speedily forgiven by McElhattan and his wife. "We were married by a German mis-

sionary we met on the mountain," explained the bride.

William McElhattan let it go at that, provided Choleesaw would adopt an English rendering of his name. William Pine was his selection, partly out of compliment to his magnanimous father-in-law, partly in translation of his own name. And the Pine family lived happily ever afterwards.

XIX.

THE COURAGE OF PETER PENTZ



THE best view of the big “bare place” on the Bald Eagle Mountain between McElhattan and Castanea is obtained from the new State Road on the opposite side of the river. The long, unbroken ridge stretches like a moss-green colored wall,

and is so narrow in some places on the comb or summit that one can sit astride of the rocks with one leg in the West Branch Valley and the other in the Valley of the Kammerdiner.

There are two bare places on the long ridge; one, comparatively small directly above the village of McElhattan, and the other, a great lengthy space like the scalded flank of a backyard cat, and covering over fifty acres, stretching from the summit two-thirds of the way down the mountain, about

midway between the small glen known as the "Little Gap" and the gap at Castanea.

Both bare places are noticeable for miles with their masses of gray-white rock; the smaller one has a large charred stump near the centre which looks at first glance like a crouching bear. The larger one is of more uneven contour and abounds with fissures, crevices and caverns.

Bears, foxes and raccoons have been taken out of the caves within the past twenty years, and to judge from the bones found in some of these hiding places, they must have abounded with animals a hundred years ago. The early settlers in the valley paid little attention to the animals which nowadays are regarded as "dangerous." They would hardly go to the trouble of loading their muskets to shoot a bear. "They are our hogs," the Indians would say, and the whites declared if such were the case "they were welcome to them."

Foxes gave them some annoyance, but their real enemies were the wolves and panthers. That the panther was the most feared

is evidenced by the fact that "panther stories" are the most numerous of all the hunting reminiscences of Central Pennsylvania. They figured in the witchcraft stories as well; it was much more impressive for the witch to assume the form of a panther than a wolf, a wildcat, or a domestic animal.

Lions in British East Africa are hardly more numerous than were panthers in the West Branch Valley up to the end of the first quarter of the Nineteenth Century. Even in Eastern Pennsylvania they abounded, 50 being killed in Luzerne county in 1818. Though hundreds are slain, their diminishing numbers were due principally to the killing off of their chief food supply, the buffaloes, elk and deer.

The first settlers at the foot of the Bald Eagle Mountain which contains the "bare places" attempted to raise cattle, sheep and hogs. This suited the panthers exactly, as calves, lambs and pigs were easier to capture, and gave up without the tussle common to the wild creatures. There was one panther which gave no end of trouble for six

years. Those who saw him at close range, for he was very bold, and would carry off a sheep out of a barnyard, stated that he had a tawney matted mane like a lion. If he were seen today he would be classed as an "escaped lion from a circus," but as there were no circuses in this country in those days, he couldn't have been that.

Experimental zoologists would have ticketed him as a hybrid between a panther and a shepherd dog. But he was in most probability a particularly masculine panther, a veritable *Felis Cougar Rex*. A list of the settlers who had had a shot at or hunted the elusive monster would sound like a taxpayers' list from the Great Island to the Long Reach. The subject of destroying it had been discussed with the redoubtable Peter Pentz, but he had been too busy fighting Indians to give much attention to the outlaws of the animal kingdom.

On one occasion when there was a lull in the hostilities with the Red Men he was paying a visit to Isaac Dougherty, whose cabin was located where McElhattan Run empties

into the Susquehanna. The evening of his arrival he was sitting with Dougherty on a bench under one of the giant linnwood trees on the river bank, discussing some of their expeditions against the Indians of ten years before, when they heard their dogs barking and a loud commotion in the barnyard. Seizing their guns with which they had been testing their old-time skill on a very alert loon in the river, they ran in the direction of the racket.

Five young steers were huddled in a mass in one corner, lowing pitifully. A full panel of the slab fence was down, and around it were several pools of blood. There was a bloody path three feet wide leading from the barn yard into the woods, looking as if every inch of the way had been contested in some fierce combat. The men were good runners and soon overtook the warring elements.

There was a level piece of ground covered with walnut trees, that had been cleared of underbrush long ago by the herds of buffaloes. In the semi-darkness they made out the prostrate form of a red and white

spotted steer; on it was crouched a huge yellowish animal with a long hood of matted hair like a lion.

Nearby lay the two hounds, panting and occasionally giving vent to howls of pain. "*Felis Cougar Rex*" was clearly master of the situation. When he saw the two hunters he gritted his teeth so audibly that they heard it plainly twenty yards away. Then he buried his head in a hole he had ripped in the carcass of the steer, taking a last long drink of its blood, and turned and bounded off in the direction of the steep face of the mountain. Both men fired their muskets, but their shots went wide.

There was no time to put the suffering hounds out of their misery, so the men ran after the retreating monster, tracking him easily in the soft ground and by occasional drops of blood which dripped from his gorged mouth.

The climb up the mountain was steep and perilous after dark, but Peter Pentz and Isaac Dougherty had never turned back for man or beast, and this time they were thor-

oughly aroused. The panther was light of foot, but at times he would break a twig in his leaps, which kept his pursuers from losing him, as there was no tracking on the rocky, mountain slope, and it was too late at night to detect any drops of blood. "He's making for the bare place," whispered Pentz, who was a faster climber than Dougherty. He ran almost as fast as the animal, but stopped every few minutes to allow his companion to catch up with him.

At length they reached the lower end of the bare place just in time to see the tail of the panther disappearing into the great cavern near the middle of the stony desert. "We've got him!" shouted Peter Pentz in triumph. The two men climbed up to the mouth of the cave, which was so low, that a human being could only enter by crawling on his belly. They lit a fire from a quantity of pine cones that had blown from the forest above, and soon had a brilliant blaze started. On it they threw a couple of logs which they found in a cranny in the rocks.

When the wind blew from the west the fire-light illuminated the cavern, but disclosed no signs of the panther. "There must be a bend in the passage," remarked Dougherty. Peter Pentz took the two muzzle-loading rifles and primed them carefully. Then he got down on "all fours," dragging a gun under each arm and with a lighted pine torch in his mouth he crawled into the cave. "If I don't get him the first shot, I'll get him the second," was his cheerful *au revoir*.

Dougherty had seen his friend in a good many tight palces in the past, but he could not help wonder what the panther would be doing if he dodged the first charge. The animal must have had his stronghold deep in the bowels of the earth, for it seemed a good ten minutes before the muffled report of the rifle was heard. "He's got him the first shot," murmured Dougherty in thankfulness.

But when, two minutes later, another report emanated from the cavern his worst fears were awakened. Drawing his hunting knife he crawled into the opening in search of his absent friend. When he came to the

bend in the passage he called "Peter, Peter, are you alive?" Immediately came the cheery answer, "Yes, yes, Isaac, but I had to kill two of them."

Dougherty hurried his "snail's pace" as best he could, until by the wavering glare of his torch he could see the outlines of Peter Pentz and his victims. They lay one behind the other in the narrow gallery, but the foremost one was *Felis Cougar Rex* with a bullet hole through his mustard colored skull. The second was a female; she, too, had been shot through the head.

Death had been instantaneous in both cases and they lay with heads resting on their paws, like huge cats fallen asleep.

"When I got within three feet of the hairy one, he rushed at me, but my bullet was speedier and he dropped. The she one tried to do the same thing, but she was easy, as the roof was low, and I finished her before she could climb over the body of her mate." This was the modest way in which Peter Pentz described his wonderful "kill."

“Over yonder in that bowl in the rocks are three cubs, the cutest little things you ever saw,” he continued. “We’ll take them home as pets.” With the enthusiasm of a child he crawled over the two carcasses and reached into the nest and drew out the young animals, which had slept through their parents’ execution.

“We’ll leave the dead ones here,” said Dougherty, but before they left Pentz scalped the male carcass, and hung the trophy, with its matted mane, to his belt.

The morning star was sole possessor of the heavens when they emerged from the gloomy labyrinth, but it appeared a trifle droopy as it dodged among the tops of the tall pines on the comb of the Bald Eagle Mountain. Carrying the three cubs they returned to the Dougherty cabin, and after a comfortable breakfast spent the morning building an enclosure for them. Peter Pentz rounded out the balance of his visit in peace, but when he left for “down country,” he found the fame of his latest exploit had preceded him.

“We hear you killed the hairy panther in

his cave," everyone would say. In reply the big red-haired frontiersman would smile modestly and point to the scalp with its long, matted brownish-yellow hair, which hung at his belt. "That's how a good many Indians would like to wear my scalp," he would add, and then turn the subject of the conversation into other channels.

XX.

TIM MURPHY'S GHOST



IN his latter days, Tim Murphy, the celebrated sharpshooter of the Revolution, who killed the British General Frazer at the Battle of Stillwater, used to confide to his intimate friends that he had once seen a ghost.

Tim was a bachelor and lived alone for many years in a log-cabin at the foot of the Bad Eagle Mountain, on the site of what is now the summer resort known as Sylvan Dell. It was a melancholy looking shack, both within and without, but Tim was a genial soul and his visitors forgot the surroundings. The interior was like a modern hunter's shanty, consisting as it did of a single room, with a curtained bunk on one side, and a large open fireplace on the other.

Above the fireplace hung the trusty rifle

that had mortally wounded the British commander, and threw the whole army of red-coats into confusion, causing the retreat to Saratoga, where they surrendered. Below the rifle hung an oval miniature case of gold, but the portrait it contained was kept a mystery by the picturesque old veteran. That it was the original of the apparition many were certain, as he always stoutly denied that General Frazer's ghost had ever appeared to him.

Whenever any one returned from a visit to Old Tim folks would say "Did he tell you about the ghost?" To which the late visitor could only reply that he had said he had once seen one, but gave no particulars. One Christmas eve when Tim was getting pretty aged he was entertaining Benjamin McAlevy, an old comrade of the Revolution, who had stopped off on his way back from a visit to his married daughter who lived in Northern New Jersey.

When Tim met him on the opposite bank of the river with his dugout, in response to his familiar war-whoop, he noticed his friend carried a bundle in one hand and a demijohn

in the other. "Pray, what does your bottle contain?" inquired Tim, jokingly. "If it's valuable stuff you'd better leave it on this side, for if our boat upsets it would be a sin to lose it." McAlevy said he would risk it, and they were soon safely landed in front of Tim's cabin.

"This is for you, with my son-in-law's good wishes," said the visitor, handing the demijohn to the old sharpshooter. "It's the best New Jersey Apple-Jack, fit to celebrate the Christmas of President Jackson or the man who licked the British at Stillwater." Old Tim was profuse in his thanks, and the rest of the afternoon was given over to merriment.

After supper, which had sobered down the two veterans, they drew their armchairs in front of the fire, and began to discuss the past. Outside the wind was blowing in icy gusts up the river, sometimes seemingly veering out of its course to moan dismally around the eaves of the snug cabin.

"It seems strange, Tim, that you never married," old McAlevy was saying. "My

children and grandchildren are the greatest pleasure of my old age, and I cherish the memory of my good wife, though she has been dead these twenty years, above anybody that ever lived, except my mother." These words put the old bachelor into a silent, reflective mood. He looked as if he wanted to tell something that had been on his mind for years, but he was loath to begin.

McAlevy watched him closely, wondering why he had become so quiet, and looked so often at the gold miniature case hanging above the fireplace. "Wake up, old boy," he called to him, "come back and tell me why you never gave a good woman the pleasure of saying she was your wife?"

Tim remained quiescent for a couple of minutes longer and then after another look at the miniature case, said, "You often heard me mention to you I'd seen a ghost?" McAlevy admitted he had, but added, "Ghosts don't make wives; I want to hear why you never married."

"Well," replied the old bachelor, "the ghost and the wife story are one; the story you

want to hear is the part of the ghost story I never told anyone before.

“I was in love once, about the time I went off to fight for the independence of our great country. I ought to have married the girl. I am sure she cared for me.”

“Wouldn’t she wait until you were mustered out?” interrupted McAlevy in his excitement.

“Not quite like that,” answered Tim apologetically. “But to go ahead with my story; you recall my sister, Ellen, who was married to Evan Edwards and lived near old Steitzetown, now Lebanon? Well, Evan made a die of it after they had been married only a few years, and I used to go down there to attend the “Cherry Fairs” and help the poor young widow with her harvests.

“I was only a boy at the time, but was big enough and strong enough to do the work of two men. In those German districts the women work in the fields with the men, and we always had as much fun as we had work. When I first went there I didn’t understand a word of Pennsylvania Dutch. I knew more

about Indian dialects, but by the end of the first season I could talk it freely, as well as make a few polite remarks in Welsh. I had a particularly happy time during the last harvest I worked at before I went to the war, but, like many happy times, it ended in disaster.

“We were particularly anxious to get the wheat into the barn in safety, as it was a fine crop and the old people were predicting a heavy rain. The sun never shone brighter even if there were a few smoke-colored clouds hanging over the mountains. Everyone in the neighborhood volunteered to help us out, and we had a small army working in the field before the day was done. Among the generous workers were the Kieffer family, consisting of father, mother, grandmother, eight children and a visitor from Reading, Mary Dilabar.

“Mary was as pretty as a picture; I can see her yet with her blue dress and a red handkerchief tied around her head. She wasn't much of a worker, and spent most of the time stroking the horses' noses, while the

rest of us tossed the sheaves. I was so busy watching her that I accidentally ran my pitchfork into one of old Kieffer's horses, which made the team run away.

"They had gone a mile before they hit a big chestnut stump and overturned the wagon. One horse broke loose and started for the mountains on a gallop. We forgot the harvest and the approaching storm, and our battalion of men, women and children followed the clumsy Conestoga mare as if she were a *Jack o'Lantern*. When we were all in the forest the storm broke with all its fury and all hands separated to crouch under rocks, logs, or overhanging boughs to lessen the inevitable drenching.

"I became separated from the party and while looking for a suitable retreat ran across Mary Dilabar seated under an old white oak. I warned her that oaks were often struck by lightning, so she moved with me across the gully to a beech tree, which the Indians say is never touched by the Storm God. With the evening there was no appreciable let-up of the rain, and it looked as if we would have

to spend the night under the sheltering beech.

“I liked nothing better, and our conversation, which began with joking about my carelessness in causing the runaway, drifted into more serious topics, and by the time the pretty young girl fell asleep in my arms, we had about agreed to get married. The morning dawned clear, and breakfastless we rejoined the harvesters as if nothing had happened. They were gathering the sheaves that had spilled from the wagon as it careened through the pastures during the runaway and some were hunting for pieces of harness which seemed to be irretrievably lost.

“Mary and I made a most congenial couple, and my sister, and the Kieffer family approved of our promised marriage. I accompanied her to Reading when her visit was completed, to meet her parents who were old French people. They did not greet us very cordially. They asked my age and I told them I was nineteen, which was a year older than I really was, and they shook their heads

and retired into a back room for deliberation.

“Mary and I, still sitting on the bench on the front steps, could hear them through the open door conversing in their strange jargon. After half an hour they rejoined us, only to say they had decided that a girl of fifteen was too young to be married, but if I would wait a year, everything would be all right. They also gave me permission to correspond with my sweetheart, shaking my hands warmly as if they approved of my future connection with their family. They told Mary it was time to come indoors, and shut the door on me without inviting me in.

“The war was at its height, and drums were beating all over Reading to excite young men to the pitch of enlistment. I wasn't very enthusiastic for several days, I was too perplexed about the way in which my interview with Mary's parents had ended. A company of riflemen had been formed and were giving exhibitions of marksmanship on the common. Great crowds had collected, and aspirants for membership in the body, which seemed very popular, were trying to equal

the unerring sight of those already accepted. I pushed my way through the throng, and borrowed a rifle.

“It did not take long for me to demonstrate my superiority to every man present, which resulted in Captain Nagle speaking to me pleasantly and inviting me to enlist. I had been feeling downcast all day, so in a spirit of recklessness I signed my name to the company roll. You know the rest of the military story, as we were pretty close friends when we served together under Morgan. But to get back to the ghost story. It was several days before I was able to obtain permission to leave the camp to make my good-bye call on Mary.

“When I reached her house I swung the heavy brass knocker with a confident air; I was in uniform, and felt the entire world must bend before me. Mary’s mother opened the door, and looked at me in surprise. I asked to see the girl, but she looked more surprised than ever. ‘Did not you get that note she sent you out to camp Tuesday morning?’ When I told her I had not, she said she

thought that was very queer. 'Mary,' she stated, 'had married Mr. Jacobs, an old family friend, three days before, and had sent me a note announcing the glad tidings.' I smiled broadly and strode away.

"My heart was sad, but I was delighted that I had enlisted, for now I wouldn't have to return to Steitzetown a jilted man; the public might think I was the one who did the jilting. After the war I returned to my early home in Northumberland county, as my sister was living there. She gave up her farm after I deserted her to go to the front.

"Years passed and all my immediate family died, leaving me to lead a hermit's life by the shores of the Susquehanna. The first Christmas eve that I was alone awoke many unhappy recollections. 'Why couldn't I have had a nice wife and children like all the other friends of my youth?' seemed to be my sole complaint. I tried to reason with myself that even if Mary had married someone else, there were other girls I might have gotten; but then I would silence that thought

with 'I didn't want them because I didn't care for them.'

"I took down the miniature and by the flickering firelight tried to decipher the features of my beloved. A traveling portrait painter had stopped with me over night, and I induced him to stay awhile and paint the likeness from my description. Her eyes were blue, and her hair chestnut brown, but I think he failed with her expression, which was beyond any artist.

"He said he ought to have a bit of ivory, but finally accepted a piece of a buffalo's jaw-bone, which I polished for the purpose. The gold case came from Philadelphia. While I was gazing intently at the little picture I felt a moistness before my eyes. It was like the impress of two soft hands, but they were so damp and clammy! Then I heard someone speak my name in tones distinct but low. It was repeated several times, and at last I conquered my stupidity and recognized the rather peculiar intonation of Mary's voice.

"I could restrain myself no longer, and called out, 'Is that you, Mary?' The voice re-

plied, 'It surely is; but don't look around for heaven's sake! I felt sorry for you all alone on Christmas eve, and have come to pay you a visit. I was very young when we agreed to marry, but it was weak and mean in me to allow my parents to influence me away from you and to marry another. My husband was twenty years older, set in his ways, selfish, and disagreeable. I led a miserable life with him for twenty years until he was drowned in the canal by one of his boatmen. I should have sent for you then, but I didn't know where you were, and I was afraid you had ceased to care for me. Forgive me now, and we will atone for the past; you are the only man I ever loved; I knew that from the start.'

"The thrill caused by her voice and the pressure of those fingers on my eyes was too much for me; I interrupted her and said I must see her. In tones of abject terror she cried, 'Don't, don't, please,' but it was too late. I turned like a flash only to behold the fragile outlines of my sweetheart melting

and mingling with the shadows and hangings of the room.

“Outside the wind sobbed piteously for the remainder of the night. For many nights after that I sat by the fire, hoping for Mary’s return. She never came, and I became convinced that her visit was merely a dream, signifying she wanted me to go to see her in Reading. I started in my canoe, and at Sunbury boarded a stage which took me there by the short route across the mountains. At the Farmers’ Hotel I asked where Mrs. Mary Jacobs lived. The landlord looked at me curiously, and said, ‘She passed away on Christmas eve last, and is buried in the Lutheran cemetery.’

“I went to the graveyard standing with bowed head before the muddy mound. On the way back the whole thing dawned on me. Mary’s spirit had appeared to me just at the instant of her death; it might have visited me often, only I shocked it into *emptiness* by demanding to see it before it had become in harmony with the new environment. That

was my overwhelming sorrow ; I feared I had destroyed her soul. But even if it is gone as a distinct personality, it will live as long as I do, enshrined in mine."

XXI.

THE LAST DRIVE



ARKNESS was rapidly falling as Bill and I emerged from the path down Otter Run into the valley of Little Pine Creek. English Town was still five miles distant and we would have to quicken our pace if we wanted to reach there be-

fore John Bowman shut up his boarding place for the night. The road was deep with sand, and we could not make progress there, so we walked along the banks on either side, which had been pastured smooth by sheep and cattle.

In places the valley is quite wide, and there are some very fertile fields, but all of it, clear to the foot of the mountains, has been under water during the great floods, especially those of 1889 and 1894. On one of the level patches, where the top soil had been washed

away, but was growing up with staghorn sumacs and wild apple trees, a number of brown and white and black and white steers were pasturing. The stars were coming out and gave the sky above the dark mountains a tone of luminous gray.

Against the sable mountains the white spots on the bodies of the cattle, and the clusters of wild carrots or "Queen Anne's Lace," which grew in profusion in the pasture, made a study in black and gray that charmed with its effective simplicity. Everything was distinctly outlined yet beautifully harmonized, and we paused to look at what typified to us a lover's meeting between Dusk and Darkness. There was a telephone pole lying by the path which had been cut to make place for a larger one, and we seated ourselves on it absorbing the marvelous nocturne into our consciousness. Silvery gray sky, sable mountains, immovable cattle of sable and white, sable clumps of foliage, sable earth bespangled with flowers of silvery lace!

No supper nor bed at English Town could tempt us to leave the scene until darkness

blurred it out. Other phases of light and shadow, other night views might affect us in the future, but never again would there be one like this. Nature is the only artist who never uses the same theme twice alike.

As we sat there with these and many other thoughts ebbing and flowing, we noticed the figure of a slim girl emerge from the background of gloom further up the road. Though she was walking fast, her head was bent and dejected and she was whispering to herself. As she passed us she did not raise her blue eyes, but the silvery tint of the sky reflected on them and enabled us to see that they were staring and vacant, the eyes of a demented person. Withal she was unusually pretty; her reddish-gold hair had been blown by the night winds about her face, which was delicately formed. She had a well-moulded nose and her lips had that exquisite fullness which only comes to women after weeping.

Bill and I looked after her until she melted into the gloom ahead; she was a rare butterfly with tattered wings flitting across a fading picture. We both agreed there was some-

thing uncanny about the girl, and it stopped our reveries and revived our zeal to reach John Bowman's boarding place. We knew all the gossips of the neighborhood congregated there in the evenings ever since the Riverside Hotel had burned down. But we still had over two miles before us, and the night became intensely black.

The night winds blew in fitful gusts from the high peaks, raced along the bed of the creek, and chased one another back again to the summits *via* the rocky gullies. At length we approached the outskirts of the settlement, the long rows of deserted black houses, with windows boarded and the front gates falling in, the dismantled tannery with the tin roofs gone, and gaping holes in its brick walls made to remove the vats and machinery.

Across the suspension bridge glimmered two lights; John Bowman's boarding place was still awake. The wind was sighing in the cables, and rattling the bolts and beams as we crossed the bridge high above the creek, which ran, a narrow gray rivulet in

the center of the wide bed of stones and pebbles that it once covered when it raced towards the parent stream in the days of its glory. Now, like an old man who occasionally feels the fire of youth return, the floods show to very young people and to strangers what it used to be. We could see several persons through the windows of the boarding house, so opened the door and went in.

John Bowman and his wife greeted us cordially, and Mrs. Bowman vouchsafed a piece of information she knew would interest us. Byron Endsley was back from Oregon. Byron had had an adventurous career as bugler of the troop which arrived too late to save General Custer at the Battle of the Little Big Horn; as a spectator of the murder of "Wild Bill" Hickok at Deadwood; and later as a seeker of gold in the Klondike.

When the tannery closed he bid a "final" farewell to English Town, but as usual the gloomy valley of Little Pine Creek had drawn him back again. But here was Byron now. We shook hands, and he wanted to tell us right off about the "silver tips" he had killed in the

Coast Range. But we were more anxious for another story, to learn the identity of the demented beauty who had stalked so spectre-like along the sandy road.

The genial landlord and his wife sat with us while we ate our suppers in the cozy little lamp-lit dining room. I asked old Bowman to tell me all about the wandering girl, and he replied that he was sorry to say she was his favorite niece, Adele Armeson. "She became queer after the last drive three years ago, and if it wasn't we were always hoping she'd get all right, she'd be in Danville long ago. Hard luck always seems to follow the good and the deserving, and she was certainly both. I never saw a girl as pretty or as sweet as she, except perhaps my wife." At this Mrs. Bowman smiled broadly.

"She was very much in love with young Grant Valentine from up in the Blockhouse country, and her affection was fully reciprocated. The families had been friends for years, and he always visited Adele's people for a few days when he came this way to work on the drives in the spring and fall.

“As a small boy I saw the first drive out of the creek. I think it was in 1861; they only drove the biggest and choicest kind of white pine logs, and always left the bark on. The last drive was composed of hemlock culls, and it made us all sad to feel that the logs would never run ‘Little Pine’ again. A good part of the last drive had to be splashed out of Stony Run, half a mile below here. For that purpose they built a New England splash-dam near the head of the stream, which was five miles from where it empties into ‘Little Pine.’

“Young Valentine, who was only twenty-four, was keenly excited about the drive, as it would take all the skill and agility of the drivers to get the logs quickly over the high sharp rocks in the bed of the stream, and avoid a jam. Many old watermen had said it couldn’t be done. He talked so much about it and the part he was going to play that Adele was anxious to watch the drive come out of the run. She knitted him a red woollen vest specially for the occasion. I happened to be at her home that morning, so asked her

to come with me in my buggy and see the frolic. We stopped the rig on the bridge where the Waterville road crosses 'Stony' near its confluence with 'Little Pine.' She said Grant had told her his drive would reach the bridge, barring accidents, about noon, which gave us a couple of hours to wait.

"But there was lots to see, the drives out of Little Blockhouse, Zimmerman's and Bear, were floating down the big stream with the crews wading waist deep in water or leaping from log to log, to keep every stick headed for its destination in Williamsport. Noon came and went, but the drive out of Stony Run had not appeared. The last log in the other drives had gone out of sight around the bend, the sun was obscured and the weather more like winter than early spring.

"By two o'clock Adele was getting cold, but she would not leave her post. I felt sorry for her, so got out of the rig telling her I would walk up the run a ways, and try and learn the cause of the delay. After I had gone a mile I heard shouting and swearing in the distance, and I at once sized it up that

the logs had jammed. I hurried along the path until I came in sight of the giant pile of logs which resembled pictures of the wooden horse drawn up before the walls of Troy.

“The jam was fifty feet high, and on top of it the boys, including Valentine, were working with cant hooks and axes to start it in motion. On a high rock near the bank stood the boss, Milt. Bradley, red in the face and angry, cursing and consigning everyone to perdition. I was not a hundred feet from him when one of the lads gave a flying leap for shore crying, ‘The *king pin’s* out; she’s moving, boys, she’s moving.’ The others, all but Valentine, projected themselves through the air, and fell panting and bruised but safe. In some way the boy’s foot had got caught between two logs, and when like the turning of a rebellious water-wheel, the vast bunch of saw-logs shot out from their tangle, he was carried down under them. Urged on by their own momentum and the accumulation of water behind they swept down, crushing

the unhappy fellow beneath them like a rock in a hopper.

“In another hundred yards they piled up a second time, making even a worse mess of it. Bradley was livid with rage, and shouted to the drivers who were all on their feet by this time, to climb in and break the jam at once. I grabbed him by the arm and shouted, ‘My Heavens, man, you can’t let that drive go on with that boy’s body underneath it; his sweetheart’s waiting on the bridge to see the logs come through.’ He turned on me with a torrent of blasphemy and struck me in the stomach with his fist, but even if I am over 50, I was a match for the big bruiser.

“As he aimed one of his blows at me, he slipped on the rock, falling heavily. I seized the opportunity to call to the drivers to let the jam stand, and as among them were ‘buddies’ of poor Valentine’s, they threw down their cant-hooks, saying they were done for the day. When Bradley recovered himself, he rushed at me, but I downed him with an uppercut, and after that he was as meek as a lamb. Meanwhile, the water was surging

into a flood behind the jam, and nature broke it, carrying everything before like an avalanche. I tried to keep up with the seething mass of logs and water, but was soon distanced. Some of the boys, however, kept pretty well abreast of it, as it was not all clear sailing, and the jagged rocks threatened to stop its advance again and again.

“Adele waiting on the bridge, heard the cracking, and the thumping, and the water’s roar, betokening the approach of the drive. Into view it came, the logs overleaping one another and turning somersaults in the frothing current, or forcing those nearest the shore high and dry on the banks. Bringing up the rear were the drivers, with their green, blue and gray shirts, but seemingly not raising a hand when a whole shoal of logs would slide on land. Grant Valentine, with his red vest, was not among them. Why was he staying behind when the others were shirking so shamefully?

“In the middle of the tumbling mass was a sixteen foot log, ponderous as a floating obelisk. She had to notice it, the size was so

much greater than the rest. She watched it come near, until just as it swept beneath the bridge she saw a piece of red material sticking to the butt end. 'My lover has been killed,' she screamed wildly to the drivers who were now standing below her on the banks. Not a man answered but their frank honest faces told the story. She fell in a faint on the bottom of the rig, but strong arms a-plenty were there in a moment to raise and comfort her. Limp and helpless I drove her to her home in the buggy.

"For ten days we doubted if she would recover, as she raved until she became insensible from exhaustion. She got well physically, but she had left her spirit go down the creek with the crushed and mangled remnants of her sweetheart. Every clear day in spring and summer she walks to the bridge, and sits there knitting until supper time. She never notices strangers, and they treat her respectfully, as any one can see by her expression that there's something *wanting*. When we who know her try to reason with

her a little she will say, 'The last drive has gone, and Grant will soon meet me here, and we will go away together.' "

XXII.

HISTORY OF TAMARACK SWAMP



IN 1850, James Hennessy, a farmer, while grubbing out stumps in a garden on the edge of the famous Tamarack Swamp in Clinton county, was surprised to unearth a number of fragments of horns which greatly resembled the antlers of the moose and caribou.

Although foreign travellers and the earliest settlers had failed to record the presence of these animals in Northern Pennsylvania, it seemed to indicate that, judging from the condition of the horns, they must have lived in the state as late as pre-Columbian times. Fossil horns of moose and caribou have been found in many caves, notably those at Riegelsville and Stroudsburg, but they gave no encouragement to the theory that any existed here since the days of remote antiquity.

When the finding of the horns was mentioned to one of the old Indians from Nichols' Run, who was in McElhattan selling medicinal herbs, he smiled, and said it recalled a story of how moose and caribou, as well as the northern trees were imported into the Tamarack Swamp by a powerful Indian Chieftain, named Ko-wat-go-chee or Wild Cat. He was the ruler of the Red Men in the upper valley of the Otzinachson, being known far and wide for his historical knowledge, fine character and powers as an orator.

He was often asked to be the guest of honor at Indian ceremonies and anniversaries in distant parts of the country, and not infrequently accepted, delivering interesting addresses on the history and destiny of his race. Of kingly rank, he was not compelled to secure a wife upon reaching his majority, but postponed this happy event, from year to year, saying he was too busy preserving the glorious traditions of his forefathers to think of such a thing.

There was a tradition among many of the tribes in New York state that the "big water" or Atlantic Ocean once overflowed its banks, causing a tremendous flood. The Indian people had received advance tidings on the subject from Gitchie Manito, the Great Spirit, which enabled them to save themselves and their chosen animals and birds by ascending to the summit of Tahawus, now Mt. Marcy, the highest peak in the Adirondack Mountains, the only point not submerged. All their human enemies, races of gigantic white and yellow men who were constantly at war with them and the huge, serpentine sea and land animals, bat-winged and griffin-clawed, which preyed on them, were drowned.

On what would be, to modern reckoners, the four thousandth anniversary of their deliverance from the great overflow, the Indians from far and wide gathered on the slopes of the big mountain to hold appropriate exercises of thanksgiving and observance. Kawat-go-chee was selected to deliver the historical oration.

Apocryphal as may be the flowery speeches attributed to Logan, Cornplant and Teedyuscung, the Indian race was fond of oratory, and produced a number of speakers who might easily have impressed an assemblage of white men. Throughout the long journey from the Otzinachson to the shadow of Tahawus, in canoes, or during dreary tramps through the forest, Ko-wat-go-chee, the orator, was rehearsing his address. Nature seemed to stimulate his naturally reflective and beautifully poised intellect, for he drew from it as he went along new similes, new symbols, a wider viewpoint, a better mastery of his language. He was in prime condition mentally and physically when he arrived at his destination, where he was welcomed by a committee of wise men, and escorted to a lodge house built of white or canoe-birch logs, to be his private residence during the three weeks the ceremonies were to last.

Not far distant from the lodge were the permanent quarters of Chief Pox-son-gay, or Yesterday, his name serving as a reminder of the sacred past, which was now to be re-

viewed at the grand ceremonial. With his family, and the bravest of his warriors, he called to pay his respects to Ko-wat-go-chee, the evening of his arrival.

In his party was his youngest daughter, Me-shon-nita, or To-Day, a maiden of such singular beauty that many believed her to be a spirit, and not a human being. To the surprise of Pox-son-gay and his followers, the sedate orator devoted a great deal of attention to the young girl; so much so that the old chief inquired if he had ever married. Ko-wat-go-chee replied in the negative, evidently pleasing his visitors immensely, as there was a rivalry as to which of the many tribes gathered in the neighborhood could give the most entertainment to the distinguished speaker.

After the Green Corn Dance, which marked the inauguration of the ceremonies, came the night of the grand oration. It took place from a bench, or level, on the side of Tahawus, and was crowded thick with Indians of every size and description. It was held on the hour that the Great Spirit was

supposed to have warned his favored people of the coming deluge. Bonfires and torches innumerable lit up the meeting-ground, from which all the timber and underbrush had been previously burned.

Ko-wat-go-chee, on a rostrum, decked with laurel leaves, and surrounded by a hundred wise men, outdid himself with his speech. It was the most sublime effort of his life, and the most eminently successful. The vast audience was held spellbound until midnight. When he ceased there were insistent cries that he go on. While naturally adapted to an affair of this kind, his real inspiration and triumph came from the presence of Me-shon-nita, in the throng below him. He had looked at her before he began to speak, and an intelligence other than his own seemed to take possession of him. Cheers, shouts of "Joh-hoh," the Indian war-cry, and felicitations of all kinds were heaped upon him, and for the remainder of the ceremonies he was the central and most sought after figure. Despite all the attentions, he managed to see a great deal of Me-shon-nita,

and when it was time to return to his domain in the Otzinachson, he respectfully asked her father to give him the girl's hand in marriage.

The old chief was highly flattered, and answered "yes" with alacrity. Me-shon-nita seemed equally pleased, so the two were married with a fresh display of pomp and ceremony. For the purpose of the long journey Ko-wat-go-chee had a litter made of oak wood, curiously carved and colored. In this the beautiful bride rested, being carried by four stalwart bearers. Ko-wat-go-chee led the way, and the rear of the procession was brought up by his half a hundred henchmen.

At first Me-shon-nita was amused by the change of scenery and foliage. She expressed no regrets at the disappearance of the cone of Tahawus from the horizon, or the gradual lessening of the spruces and firs from the make-up of the forest. She spoke enthusiastically of the broad plateau with its populous village of compactly built houses, each with its purling spring, which was to be her new home. Ko-wat-go-chee was very

happy for a time, until his lover's blindness had subsided enough to show him that his bride was not as light-hearted as might be. At first she denied that everything was not well with her, but at length she confessed to homesickness. She missed the spruces and balsams of the North, the looming vastness of Tahawus against the sky line.

Ko-kat-go-chee was as rich as he was resourceful and soothed her by saying he would turn her new home into a northern park, all but the shadow of Tahawus. While one-half of his retainers set to work grubbing out the trees on a large area at the northern edge of the village, the other half were digging trenches to carry the water from the myriad springs into the newly cleared ground. As soon as the work was completed, every man and boy in the village, except a dozen armed guards, started in single file for the North. It was months before they returned, but when they hove in sight, Meshon-nita clapped her hands for joy.

Each Indian carried two northern trees of respectable size. There were Tamaracks,

White Spruces, Black Spruces, Balsam Firs, a few Cedars, arbor vitae and junipers, and these were planted in the soft, moist soil of the clearing. When all were in position, save for the absence of Tahawus on the sky line, it was like a forest in the North, the native pines and hemlocks which formed the natural background, adding rather than detracting from the scene.

For a time Me-shon-nita was appeased, and spent much of her time walking among the young conifers, and stroking their smooth, dark needles. In the lodge-house at night she was loving and companionable with her husband, who imagined the ghost which had threatened his happiness had been laid. But it was not to last. One evening Me-shon-nita was glum and uncommunicative. The trees were thriving, so the solicitous husband could not fathom the cause. He coaxed and pleaded until midnight, when she relaxed and told him she missed the animals of the North.

“You had the pines and hemlocks here, but I longed for the spruces and firs; you have

elk and deer here, but I miss the moose and caribou."

"Worry no longer, my beloved," replied Ko-wat-go-chee, "the northern animals shall be here." The next morning an army of men started work on a stockade to completely enclose the park.

This done, every man and boy, save for the dozen personal retainers, started single file for the North. They were gone even longer than when they went for the trees, but they returned, each leading or carrying a young moose or caribou. It was a pretty sight to see the little creatures scampering among the spruces and firs; it was like a northern forest scene in miniature. The happiness of Meshon-nita was unbounded, and her husband felt that there would be no further complaints.

Again he was mistaken, for though the young animals grew and became livelier each day, a cloud had obscured the smile of Meshon-nita. This time it took weeks to learn the longing which obsessed her. Finally she admitted she wanted to see her family, the

whole tribe, in fact, with whom she had been reared.

“They shall all come here on a visit,” said the complaisant Ko-wat-go-chee. Immediately every man and boy in the village was headed for the North again. The unhappy Me-shon-nita watched for their return with more eagerness than in the past. Perhaps that was why they seemed to be longer absent than on the two previous trips.

When they did return Me-shon-nita ran out to greet them, singing and clapping her hands. Heading the procession came litters like the one in which she had travelled from the North, supported by sturdy bearers containing all the members of her family. Behind them came the remainder of the tribe, and their dogs, escorted by her husband’s warriors, who obliged the Indian mothers by carrying their papooses, blankets and utensils. Every Indian came as a privileged guest, and the trip had been made as easy as possible.

Now that she had a northern forest, northern animals, her entire family and tribe, she

acted as if she was the happiest young woman in existence. She impressed on her father that his entire party were to remain an indefinite time, which suited the Indian temperament exactly. As guests they were not expected to furnish food, garments, fuel or houses; all were provided by their genial hosts.

Besides, they were told the winters were not so long nor severe as in the North. There was no reason to return home for a while; it was a relief to escape the biting winds that swept off Tahawus. But after the newcomers had established themselves, and became part and parcel of Ko-wat-go-chee's tribe, or to be more exact, had assimilated it, even to the extent of Pox-son-gay's often assuming authority over all, a shadow drove the smile away from Me-shon-nita's lips.

Months elapsed before her distracted husband learned the truth. She was pining for a sight of Mt. Tahawus. It was the dead of winter, and much as he would have loved to please her, Ko-wat-go-chee deemed it expedient to wait until spring before taking her on

a visit to the North. Old Pox-son-gay grumbled when he heard of the proposed trip, fearing perhaps that he might be "invited" to accompany the party. "Never had a winter seemed so long;" that was the burden of Me-shon-nita's complaint.

Nothing that could be done appeased her; she must see Tahawus, and see it soon. She neither ate nor slept, and was quarrelsome and irritable. The medicine men advised Ko-wat-go-chee that she must have her wish, else she would surely die. There was nothing further to do but to turn over the reins of government to Pox-son-gay, and Ko-wat-go-chee started for the North with his insatiable wife, attended by a few faithful retainers. They had gotten almost as far as the southern shore of Keuka Lake, in what is now New York state, when a blizzard of unparalleled severity overtook them. By dint of hard work a "lean-to" of boughs was constructed under some hemlocks, where the travellers sought protection.

Me-shon-nita chafed at the delay, declaring that her bearers were big enough to

march through the drifts unmindful of the tempest. But the snow was so swift and so blinding that Ko-wat-go-chee declared they must wait. The first night Me-shon-nita lay awake listening and watching for the storm to stop. It didn't stop, but apparently grew worse.

All the next day she was in a belligerent frame of mind, and abused the retainers so roundly that they crouched, cowed in one corner of the shelter. Her husband's efforts at soothing her were unavailing, and he was tired out when night set in. Everyone, including apparently Me-shon-nita, fell asleep early, but the crafty woman was only feigning. When all was still she got up and peered out. It was very dark, and she felt the sting of the snowflakes on her face.

Unmindful of the gloom and drifts she stepped boldly into the storm, and headed, as instinct guided her, to the North. She had travelled several miles, sometimes up to her neck in snow, when an open place like a mammoth clearing spread out before her. Far in the distance through the falling snow, in the

half-light that comes before dawn, she could discern a great promontory against the skyline.

"It's Tahawus, old Tahawus, that I love," she shouted with hysterical gratification. "Those fools hiding under the trees little thought it was so near."

She redoubled her efforts, taking a tumble several times into the drifts which engulfed her like feather-quilts. Out on the open place she made better progress, as the wind had blown the surface bare, it seemed like ice. Through the gray light she could note the outline of the promontory; it was a shade darker than the snow-swept sky.

With head erect she was pushing on when suddenly one foot sank beneath her; she felt cold water, and before she could stop her other foot had slipped; she was sinking fast into the chilly depths of the lake. Just as she disappeared she shrieked, "I die in sight of old Tahawus; I die happy!"

In the morning Ko-wat-go-chee and his followers discovered her absence, and tracked her with considerable effort through the for-

est to the edge of Keuka. The path, now half filled with fresh-fallen snow, led out on the ice, and they followed it for a mile until they came upon a gaping air hole.

There was no path beyond; Me-shon-nita, the eternally unhappy, had fallen in and been drowned. The stricken husband gazed dumbly into the lead-colored water and raised his eyes. Against the horizon loomed a great cone-shaped promontory.

"It looks like Tahawus," he murmured, "but even in death, she was disappointed."

The ferocity of the storm made it impossible to linger any further, so sadly he made his way back to the "lean-to" and ultimately to his transplanted Northern Wilderness on the highlands of the Otzinachson. And when he died years later they buried him in a corner of dry ground under the Tamaracks.

XXIII.

CORA PEMBERTON'S BIOGRAPHY



WHEN the train emerges from the tunnel through Paddy's Mountain on the way to Co-burn, far up in the first ravine to the left can be seen a tiny whitewashed cabin. In summer when the leaves are on the oaks and aspens it is entirely hidden by the foliage, but in winter when the fallen leaves and the few lingering leaves on the oaks color the glen a rich nut-brown, the little structure stands out boldly.

It was at the latter time of the year that Cora Pemberton first became interested in the outside world as symbolized by trains and trainmen, and would wave to them every time they passed. The little school house she attended was on the other side of the tunnel, it was easier to walk through it, and stand close against the sooty walls when freights

passed, than to follow the winding path across the mountain. The train crews got to know her, a small figure with a white apron over her head, to shield her eyes from sparks and cinders.

It took some pluck to go through the gloomy tunnel alone; a city girl might think of tramps, but their existence had not dawned on Cora. She was a trifle afraid of snakes, especially after she killed a copper-head that was lying lengthwise under the flange of one of the rails. From the beginning she was firmly convinced that schooling was an unnecessary ordeal, bringing her something that would never be of any use to her. She began early to shirk her tasks, and the first school year was spent principally in looking at Alvin Dietrich, a stout, thickset boy, the biggest in the class, who sat directly in front of the teacher. There was a sort of sculptural finish to his features, that was probably why she admired him.

Her mother was a daughter of old Jonas Cleon, whose parents were Greek refugees, settling with others of their race near Salona,

a village named in honor of the Salonica in Macedonia. This probably gave her the love of beauty which found its only outward expression in an admiration for handsome men. Had she been educated she would have found many things the peers of handsome men in this "world beautiful."

The stout boy did not pay any attention to Cora, she was too young, but his indifference wrapped the roots of her affection for him around her soul. In school she wrote again and again on her slate, only to rub it out, "I will marry Alvin Dietrich." As she grew with so few new impressions to influence her, the motto, "I will marry Alvin Dietrich," became her ruling passion. But maybe it was not her narrow viewpoint, but some subtle attractiveness in Alvin, that made the spell so lasting. By the time he was seventeen, to use the local vernacular, he had "fixed out" two girls causing untold misery to their parents and selves. The year after Cora had ended her school career, he took a summer job with a man named Ilgen, who had a small farm and was clearing a lot of

new ground not far from the school-house. Saturdey nights Alvin walked to his home, which was situated three miles beyond the tunnel. Naturally, as he walked along the ties Cora could notice him from where she sat on the front steps of her tiny home up the hollow. The first Saturday he passed she heard her father saying, "Young Dietrich is helping old Ilgen clear his new ground," and that raised her spirits to think that this rare being would in all probabilities pass by frequently during the summer.

She never could get along with her father and mother, and her opinion of her brother and sister was that they were "too slow." These sentiments, together with her rapidly flowering beauty, made her parents anxious to repress her spirits. The next Saturday night she discovered that the cow was on the track. The poor, brow-beaten animal had often committed that indiscretion before, but this was the first time that Cora had taken notice of it. She ran down the ravine, and along the track in the direction of Coburn, as

if trying to hear the "tunkle-tunkle-tum" of the cow-bell.

For a girl of fifteen she was unusually well developed, not at all in height or stoutness, but in the general contour of her figure and features. Age, not size, was the principle of her mother, consequently the skirts of her simple white frock were many inches too short. Her face had unmistakable Greek lines, her dark brown hair was parted in the middle and tied with a large bow of pale blue ribbon on the top of her pretty head. Her eyes were round, of a shade strangely in keeping with the ribbon in her hair, while her lips had that pouting mobility that vanishes with the first responsibilities.

Wearing black stockings and dainty oxfords, she tripped along the cinder path, slender and graceful, for all the world like the reincarnated spirit of one of her Greek ancestors. But if the cow was on the track she must have been a fast traveller. After a mile of walking Cora decided the search was fruitless. On the way back she expected her reward and got it.

The track was full of curves, so she almost ran into Alvin before seeing him. He was walking the ties, cap in hand, and the sun's rays which seemed to be gathering themselves into the usual crimson ball before sinking behind the western mountains, gave a glint of gold to his dark curls. All was silent save for a mourning dove cooing dolefully in a distant thicket. They greeted one another like old friends and such they became before another week had elapsed. Alvin found it convenient to come down the following evening to have Cora's father mend his grubbing hoe, another night he wanted his pole axe sharpened, and so on.

The stern parents liked to talk with the young man; he was a relief in an existence where they sometimes did not speak to an outsider in two weeks. In the winter Alvin decided he would be doing old man Ilgen an injustice if he left him; Ilgen likewise was lonely, although he knew in his heart that the young fellow was an exceptionally "dull-ess" workman.

With the spring came two new elements into Cora's development. One was she was forbidden to see her admirer, whose reputation had become tarnished; the other was the building of a spur from the prop-timber railway to the head of the hollow above her home. There were four bubbling springs in the glen, one very near the summit, which decided the prop-timber men to locate the camps at the terminus of their tracks. The flat where the pitch pines were standing stretched for miles, consequently the job would last for five years at least, and the camps would be extensive.

This caused great rejoicing in the Pember-ton home; sociable neighbors and steady employment had descended upon them with one swoop. Cora was the exception to the rule; she did not enthuse much over the new order of things; she was still mopey over her segregation from Alvin. Among the first to arrive on the scene were the superintendent, Edson Maugher, and his son, Earle. It was policy to curry favor with the natives, so

they promptly visited the Pembertons, offering work to father and son.

The superintendent explained that most of his time was spent in Youngmanstown; his son was practically his assistant and would live at the camp, acting as timekeeper, book-keeper and general representative. This stamped the son as no common youth, and Pemberton and his boy gazed at him in admiration.

Earle Maugher was a pleasant-looking youth of twenty, standing a couple of inches under six feet, with brown hair, blue eyes and regular features. He was of slight build, which indicated his labors had been more academic than manual. He was introduced to Mrs. Pemberton and her daughters, but his fancy seemed to light on Cora. What a wonderful thing it was to be out in the woods following a congenial occupation, with such a pretty girl as a neighbor. He was a modest lad, but the interest he felt for the young beauty spurred him to more courage than was his wont. Every evening he came down to Pemberton's; he could look at Cora, even

if he felt a little reserved about becoming better acquainted.

But in course of time this wore away, and he even imagined that she liked him a little. His world was not hers, and though he tried his utmost, the stories of his athletic feats at high school did not interest her as he would have liked. One Sunday evening, by accident he happened into the keynote of the situation. He heard loud voices as he neared the house; it was Pemberton and his wife scolding Cora. He heard the voice of her sister, Esther, saying, "I saw them together; she can't lie out of it." Evidently they were berating her for meeting some one clandestinely, presumably a man.

A hot shudder ran through the young fellow, for his intentions were serious, and now he found himself only a supernumerary. After he knocked on the door, the voices stopped instantly, but Cora looked flushed, and there were tears in her eyes, telling the story better than words. Being too much in love to turn back, Earle continued his nightly visits, and tried to spend his Sun-

days around the premises so that Cora's chances of seeing his unknown rival would be lessened.

In the late fall one of the men in camp told him the whole story. Cora was a beautiful girl, everyone recognized that, but she was inclined to be wild, and was infatuated with a worthless fellow named Alvin Dietrich. It was a great pity; her parents had tried everything, but she would always outwit them and meet the rascal on the sly.

The young man lay awake all night; first it was chagrin that prevented sleep, then it was constructing plans to stop the foolish intrigue and get the girl. When morning dawned through the one window of his private shack, he had decided on a plan of action. He would ask Cora to marry him at once, she would learn to love him surely, and if she hesitated, he would enlist the aid of her parents to consummate the match. These were ridiculous ideas, but Earle was only twenty and very much in love.

That evening when he hurried down to the Pemberton shanty to put his plan into exe-

cution, Cora was nowhere to be seen. He inquired of the mother, but she looked blankly out of the window and pretended not to hear. He asked Esther, but she went on with her sewing. As he stood in the doorway, embarrassed by the silence, Pemberton himself came in, and touched him on the shoulder, motioning him to come outside. The young man followed the lanky mountaineer to the woodshed, who took a seat on the frayed chopping-block.

Earle, pale and nervous, leaned against the wall eyeing him intently. "My friend," began the mountaineer, "a great sorrow has come to us, Cora is in trouble and says you are ——." Earle, instead of being shaken, was exultant, and broke in quickly, "Yes, sir, it is true, I am only too glad to marry her; tomorrow if you say the word." Pemberton looked at him intently; "I would never have believed it, I thought it was the scoundrel Dietrich, and she was blaming you to shield him, but with your word it must be true."

Nothing more was said until they had re-entered the cabin. Pemberton made an affirmative nod to his wife, who hesitated a minute, and then went to the door of the stairway leading to the room under the roof, calling Cora to come down. She didn't show any signs of acquiescing, so her mother had to open the door a second time and speak to her sharply.

With faltering steps the girl came down, and when she appeared her eyes and lips were swollen from crying. Earle rushed to her and caught her in his arms, kissing her a half dozen times. When he released her, it was easy to see she had not been soothed by this lover-like demonstration. She seemed pettish and rebellious, and her parents sat on the stiff wooden chairs as rigid as the chairs, dumbfounded at her conduct. The young man repeated in her presence that he was ready to marry her the next day, but she answered very bluntly, "The day after tomorrow would suit me better."

The relations of all parties were strained, so Earle hurried away as quickly as possible.

As he climbed the path up the ravine, his brain whirled with conflicting emotions. He loved Cora, he knew that; he would marry her, though he was entirely innocent of the charge made against him; but would she love him, could he interest her, could he hold her, after they were married? Something told him it was futility to marry a girl whose body and soul were another's, but then came the overmastering knowledge of his love; he was arguing in a circle.

Outside the main boarding house a big woodsman was leaning against the wall, solitary and massive, in the darkness. "Hello, Earle," he called out; "heard the news? Alvin Dietrich's jumped a freight and gone to parts unknown. Another girl scrape, I calculate."

"Why is it," thought Earle, "we always hear the very thing we don't want to hear and hope isn't true, at the time when we are thinking of it ourselves?" He merely said goodnight to the woodsman, and passed on to his own shack. The next day he offered himself as an object of congratulations to

several of the younger men in the camp. "I'm going to be married to Cora Pemberton tomorrow," was all he said.

They shook his hand warmly, but once he thought he detected two of the husky lads exchanging glances. At noon hour he wended his way to his sweetheart's home, arriving there just as the family were finishing dinner. Mrs. Pemberton urged him to take a seat at the table, but he was too nervous to eat, and said he didn't care for anything. Cora looked very white, and hardly spoke to him as he entered. One would have thought he had injured her in some way instead of being her unselfish benefactor. He said they would start at daybreak for the county seat to get the license, and after the wedding he'd take her to Atlantic City.

Before leaving he asked her to walk with him to the gate, and she assented sullenly. When they got where no one could hear, Earle summoned up courage and said, "If I didn't love you so much, I would never have submitted to the charge you brought against me. You know in the entire length of our

acquaintance I never kissed you a dozen times."

Cora looked down at the path, and replied, "If I wasn't sure of your love, I'd have never brought you into this; I knew you would stand by me."

The young man smiled with exultation, but his happiness was short-lived. After a pause the girl went on, "I don't love you a bit; Alvin is the one I care for, but he is gone, and I will never see him again. He always told me if I ever got this way he'd jump a freight and never come back. It is all my fault, and I must suffer the consequences."

Earle took his medicine bravely, saying, "But you are going to love me soon; I will be so happy with you, that I am sure you will be." Then he clasped her hand, and started up the path.

Cora's mother was standing in the door, and, as she passed, she urged her in angry tones to get her things together for her wedding journey. "Mind, it is a long drive to Derrstown. You'll have no time for packing in the morning, and you want to have all

your best things with you if you're going to 'Atlantic.' "

Cora wondered what her mother meant by "best things;" as far as she was aware her wardrobe was as plain as it was limited.

During the afternoon she pretended to pack a little and sew a little, but her thoughts were far away. Several times when her mother spoke to her she failed to answer. Occasionally she would gaze through the window down the hollow, to the railroad where the rails were gleaming in the sun. While her mother was preparing supper she slipped out the back door and ran down the hill.

It was already dark enough to make the opening of the tunnel resemble the yawning mouth of a cavern. She quickly walked along the cinder path below the track in the direction of the swart labyrinth. She had not been gone five minutes when Earle appeared at the house, and, not finding her, a search was started. Esther, always wisest on her sister's habits, suggested that she had probably gone for a stroll on the railroad. This excited the young man, as he feared that

after all she might have a rendezvous with Dietrich; at any rate she had headed for her her old-time trysting place.

He rushed head-long down the ravine, and looked up and down the tracks, but no figure in white relieved the blank darkness. Far within the recesses of the tunnel he heard the hissing and rumble of an approaching freight. He started in the direction from whence it was coming; he knew not why. Just when the yellow glare of the headlight streamed out upon the ties, like fire from a dragon's mouth crawling from his pit, he saw a slender form all in white run out from a clump of gray birches beside the track. He ran forward; it was Cora bent on self-destruction.

He was a swift runner, and was within a yard of her when the ponderous cow-catcher hit her. As she was ground under, like a daisy beneath a reaper, her eyes met his and she cried out, "I don't like you. I love Alvin. I don't want to live without him."

The engineman brought the big compound to a stop with a jerk, sending a shudder

through the long line of "battleships," that sounded like the train's groan of despair over the beautiful thing it had destroyed.

The entire crew grouped themselves about Earle, whose ill-concealed tears betrayed the grief he felt. There was little to say, the trainmen knew the story as well as had the prop-timber men. The old engineman mopped his brow with his red cotton handkerchief as if perplexed at what was to be done; then he faltered, "Love is a terrible thing when folks are very young."



THE "BLACK FOREST" TODAY

XXIV.

THE VISTA



WAS sitting on a log looking along the Vista, which was a natural runway for deer, one bright November morning during the hunting season. Bill had gone on ahead to see if he could obtain a closer view of a many-pronged buck which we had shot at, but missed an hour or two earlier, but I concluded to test my luck by remaining where I was.

My rifle lay across my knees, and when I was not day-dreaming, or watching a Cooper's hawk circling high above in the turquoise dome, I would squeeze with my fingers the ends of a small light mustache. It couldn't have been much of a mustache, for I was just nineteen, and it has been shaved off now ten years.

"The Vista" was one of the oddest of the many odd sights of the famous Black Forest, and it is hard to realize that the woodsman's axe has levelled the entire forest into a desert vista within the short space of the same ten years. This sylvan canyon had been devised by old Shadrach Glover, thirty-five years before, in order to get a "line" on bees. To do so, evidently regarding nature's prodigality as limitless, he demolished the timber on a strip ten feet wide, a mile in length, stretching to where the mountain dipped towards the waters of Lovett's Run.

The giant virgin white pines stood so thick that the trees which had been cut could not fall, but leaned against the standing timber, embracing them with their sharp-tipped, barkless branches like the time-worn story of hideous skeletons embracing wedding guests. A tangle of tall rhododendrons grew about their base, seeking to hide the ugly stumps. Whenever a slight breeze blew, they rattled like skeletons, and wheezed and sawed and gibbered as they rubbed their weather-toughened trunks against the bark

of the live trees which very unwillingly acted as their supporters.

Bill seemed absent a long while, and I felt he must have lost his quarry, else I would have heard the heavy report of his "machine gun." I did not like to leave this unique spot, knowing I would never see its like again, as the jobbers had almost finished the corduroy road from Lovett's to Pine Bottom Run, which meant that the work of the lumbermen on what was one of the last remaining large bodies of original pine in the state, would soon commence.

Just as I was most restless, four heavy volleys rang out on the bracing air; they were far away, yet their echoes seemed to rack and shake the severed trunks of the dead pines, dying down in the forest depths like the last notes of a violin. I jumped up, and was about to hurry north along the Vista when out of the rhododendrons emerged the figure of a wonderfully beautiful young girl. It was practically winter and her head was covered with a dark blue "fascinator" placed far enough back to reveal the intense black-

ness of her hair, the blackest I have ever seen on a human being.

Her eyes were equally black, with a peculiarly pleasing, sprightly expression, and her white skin had just a touch of color to it, recalling a description I had read of "a rose reflected through a vase of alabaster." She wore a brown worsted jacket, coming half way down on her dark blue calico dress, and showing her trim little figure to advantage. She carried a tin pail with a top on it, which she swung as she walked. We both seemed surprised to meet in this sequestered spot, but I started the acquaintance by inquiring if she knew who had fired the shots.

"Why, that's my friend, Solon Tussey," she replied jubilantly, "we were coming along together when the biggest buck I ever saw in my life crossed the creek ahead of us; it was too far for a shot, so he left me to trail it down."

"Where are you going with the bucket?" I asked.

"Why, we were going to Grindstone Hill to see old Mammy Kephart, who is very sick.

Solon cut a bee tree yesterday, and I thought she'd fancy some of the honey."

"But," she added, in her quick, enthusiastic manner, "Grindstone Hill can't mean anything to you; you don't belong in these parts. I've never seen you even in Williamsport."

"No," I replied, "I don't come from this section, not even from Williamsport; my home's in New York City."

"New York City," said she, seating herself beside me on the log; "that's a long ways off. I've always wanted to go there; it must be a grand place; but there's one city I'd rather go to than anywhere else, and that's Paris."

"Paris," I said, "how did you ever get to thinking about Paris when Philadelphia and New York can be reached in a day's journey?"

"Well, my father's ancestors, so the story goes, came from Paris, that's why I want to go there. My father wanted to go there, my grandfather also, and they say my great-grandfather started for the old country, but

died after only getting as far as Harrisburg."

"Have you formed any idea of what Paris looks like, or how to get there?" I inquired.

"Yes," she said smilingly. "I reckon I know a lot about it; I can see it all in my mind's eye, the Place Vendome, the Seine, the Louvre, the Place de la Concorde, Napoleon's Tomb, the Champs Elysee, the Arch of Triumph, the Bois de Boulogne, Auteuil, Longchamps, Notre Dame; yes, the Musee Carnavalet, and even the Place des Vosges, the Jardin des Plantes, Mont Valerien and Versailles."

"Where on earth did you learn the names of so many places, and how can you pronounce them with the proper accent?"

"I got the names out of an old book called 'Atlas of Paris,' by Maxine Ducamp; I have gotten the pronunciation from an English and French dictionary; my school teacher found them for me in a second-hand book store in Philadelphia.

"Why, I could flatten out that giant ant-hill yonder and on it draw you a diagram of

the city and its boulevards, only I haven't the time and I don't want to disturb the ants. It has been my dream to visit Paris. I'm sure I'd feel at home there, and if I wait, my time will come. I'd love to go now, when I'm young, and can enjoy the parks and rivers, and feel like climbing the Eiffel Tower!"

"Why don't you try and arrange a trip? It isn't difficult or expensive."

"I wouldn't know how; I had hopes a few months ago, but now since I've promised Solon I'd marry him, the prospects don't look good.

"Were *you* ever in Paris?"

I replied that I had been there on several occasions, which seemed to impress the young girl mightily, for it sent a rush of color into her pretty cheeks.

"Were you really there? You are the first person I ever met who even said he had been. Now to prove it, tell me on which side of the Seine is the Rue de la Cote d'Or?"

"I was unable to answer, but I laughed so spontaneously, that she was convinced of my sincerity.

“Do you expect to go again soon?”

I hesitated a minute before replying and said, looking her full in those marvelous black eyes, “I’ll tell you if you first let me know your name and your age.”

“Well, I don’t see what that has to do with your next trip to Paris, but I’m certainly not ashamed of my name; it’s Elgie Barton; you’ve heard of old Larius Barton on the Pike; he’s my uncle; and I’m not ashamed of my age, either, even if I’m only seventeen.”

“If you weren’t about to get married we could both start for Paris next week.”

“Start for Paris next week!” she exclaimed, dropping her bucket among the mosses. “I suppose Solon would wait until I got back; I could see all I wanted in six weeks.”

“But,” I interposed, “if you went on a long trip like that with me, we’d have to get married; we don’t look enough alike to travel as brother and sister.”

“We surely don’t,” she answered, after scrutinizing me from head to foot. “You’re a stranger, but you’ve been to Paris and are

willing to take me there; that's bigger inducement than most men offer when they are courting girls. I think I can easily care for you. I'll go with you; I'll start now. But promise me if we can't agree, you'll leave me stay in Paris." This from a mountain girl ten years before the subject of "trial marriages" had been heard of by the average person.

"Hadn't you better tell your folks?" I ventured.

"Certainly not," said Elgie, "my mother and step-father aren't the least interested in Paris, but it's also possible if I told them they might say they'd come along, and I wouldn't want to impose so many on you until we are better acquainted."

"If we two were together, we'd have more time for sightseeing; my mother's rheumatic; one of us would have to be with her always. I'm afraid, too, they'd both get seasick, and that would never do.

"Oh, how I'd love to see an 'Ocean Liner.' I've dreamed about walking the decks hundreds of times. I've read all about the

Oceanic, the Teutonic, the Campania, the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse, the Gascoyne, the Touraine. Which shall we take?"

"This is the happiest moment of my life," she added, as we clasped hands to seal the bargain. I put the rifle on my shoulder, and we got up, heading for the Quinn's Run road to begin the first stage of our unpremeditated journey. We had to laugh when we noticed the quantity and quality of our baggage, one 38-55 Savage rifle, one quart tin bucket full of honey.

"This is the happiest moment of my life," I thought as I gazed at my beautiful and interesting companion. We had not gone a hundred yards when we heard voices in the dark thicket of rhododendrons; then I saw Bill's smiling face appear, and soon after the face of a tall dark youth. "We both fired at the same time," called Bill, "and from each side of the hollow, but my bullets did the work; say, he's an old 'socket,' has eleven points, and will weigh at least two hundred and fifty hog-dressed."

Then the young man broke in, "Too bad, Elgie, to make you wait so long, but that buck was worth a week of waiting, even if our friend gets the honor of the kill." And without another word the boy and girl filed off into the path that wound its way among the rhododendrons under the tall white pines.

We waved good-bye, and I dropped down on another log. "Why don't you congratulate me on my fine marksmanship?" said Bill, "he's got eleven points on each horn; you'll say he's the biggest ever when you help carry him over to the new corduroy."

But I did not have much to say. My eyes were glued on the tangle of dark leaves which had closed, undoubtedly forever, between me and that clever and attractive mountain maid. It was not until we saw the Cooper's hawk make a downward dart from the turquoise dome that I followed my hunting comrade reluctantly in the direction of the fallen antlered monarch.

Many, many things have happened to me since, but whenever I visit Bill at McElhattan and see that set of eleven-pronged antlers on

the wall of his workshop, my thoughts go back through a vista of ten years to little Elgie Barton, and the trip to Paris we might have had, if we had only started a minute or two sooner.

THE PITCHER PLANT

XXV.



ES, the Bear Meadows has a ghost, but such a frail, indeterminate one that when it appears on the first nights of the New Moon, it is hard to tell if it is really an apparition or merely a trail of transparent, silvery light from the heaven-

ly crescent. But, whether wraith or moonbeam, it has shown through the elbow of a gnarled, half-dead white oak every new moon for the past twenty years, like a spangled scarf across a balustrade.

If a ghost, it is a modern one, for none of the old settlers remembered it when the red-spruce forest existed, and the Bear Meadows was famed as the botanical wonder of the State. The only way to "lay it" would be to cut down the mis-shapen white oak, but as it has been scorched so often by forest fires to

be of no commercial value, no one would take that trouble. One of the old settlers who has lived on the outskirts of the Meadows for forty years has very decided notions concerning the ghost. He is sure it did not antedate the lumbermen; he is equally sure that he knows whose ghost it is.

"I saw the ghost almost the first night it appeared. I made up my mind all about it, but it wasn't my business to talk," he told me when I met him on the train en-route to the Bellefonte Fair. "It came the year after they slashed out the big spruces, but that wasn't the reason; would you like to hear about it?" I was very much interested, especially as I had not been fortunate to see the Meadows in the days of the giant pines and spruces, when botanists found it a paradise for their researches. To me it was a wretched-looking region, but if it possessed a ghost, a compensation had been found for its desolated areas.

"Before they cut the timber and the fires went through," resumed the old settler, "quite a few families drew their entire support from the Meadows. Game was plentiful,

and hunters were never disappointed when they went after deer. Often they brought back bears, catamounts, foxes and even wolves, while the wild turkeys and 'pheasants' would have fed every one in the neighborhood if all other sources of supply failed. Trappers made a nice living, as did berry-pickers, and the folks who cut a few choice trees here and there. Trout abounded in the streams, and some of the biggest in the State were caught there.

"Among the families dependent on the Meadows for their support were the Nolls. They were a young couple, the husband, Zacharias, was less than thirty, the wife possibly twenty-five, and they had three of the prettiest children I ever laid eyes on. I always thought Zacharias a dull sort of a fellow before he took to the woods. He tried operating for a time along the L. & T., but when he got fresh with the son of one of the railway officials who stopped at the station where he was working, while on a fishing trip, the superintendent was glad of the chance to hand him a 'permanent vacation.'

“Then he tried clerking at Coburn, driving team, and bossing on a road job, but he made good at nothing, until he saw the opportunities in the Meadows. It was an easy life; all he had to do was to set his traps and get them full of bears, foxes, raccoons, martens, minks and weasels, and once he actually got a black wolf. A fur dealer down to Lewisburg gave him \$15 for the hide, which was a beauty. He would go into the woods, sit on a log for an hour or so, and come home with a fine deer. I have seen him prop his fishing rod on the bank and try to doze, but the trout bit so fast, he didn't have time for a good snooze. Sometimes he would sneak a couple of choice spruce logs to the mill.

“Some of the land was in dispute over the ownership; while it went on the young man felt he must not allow the trees to grow too thick. The wife was a very different sort of person. She was, first of all, as pretty as a picture, but that isn't saying the husband was not good looking, for he surely was. She was a fair-haired girl, but not one of those washed-out blondes that we mountain-

eers dislike. Her hair was the color of real gold, like you see in wedding rings, and smooth, and soft, and very abundant. Though she had three living children, and had buried a fourth, her figure was as slight and straight as the day she married.

“Folks wondered why she married the man she did, but not I, for who else better could she have married? All the boys that lived around the Meadows were the same; some went away and stuck to their jobs, but all at heart had a hankering to be back and fool with the bear traps. The young woman in question was as energetic as her husband was lazy. She was always reading books, and when she couldn't afford to send off for them borrowed them in every direction. I have known her to walk five miles to get the loan of a book. She was interested in all the trees and plants in the Meadows, and was the only person hereabouts who expressed regret when the lumbermen got busy among the red spruces. ‘It'll help rid out the wildcats and foxes,’ was the only way most of us commented on the new order of things.

“If we had looked ahead, we would have put her down as a smart woman, as after the timber was cut the streams dried out, the springs disappeared, and with the wildcats and foxes went all the other fur-bearing and game animals that gave us our livelihood. We often wished the forest back, with all its cats and foxes, but ultimately most every one got tired of wishing and moved away. I felt too old to move, but I wished I had, as I can't find much financial return from the ghost, and animals are too scarce to hunt if the state won't pay a bounty.

“Well, to return to the young couple, it did seem as if they were drifting apart. There is a 'seed time' with human beings just as there is with plants. After the seed is planted and comes forth in a harvest of little folks, or else nature's attempt to produce the same, couples unless they are exactly mated temperamentally invariably begin growing away from one another. Flowers are fertilized by the pollen from different plants. Elizabeth Noll seemed bent on educating her-

self, Zacharias Noll to while away his time in the woods.

“There was big excitement in these parts when the lumbermen were cleaning out the Meadows. Thirty-five teams were employed and over a hundred men made up the various camps. Board was high, and everything we could raise had a ready market. Zacharias worked as an extra teamster occasionally, but was principally occupied supplying the camp bosses’ tables with trout and game. Elizabeth took little interest in the commercial side of the operation, but, as I said before, denounced the destruction of the timber and rare plants whenever anyone would listen to her. Once she wrote letters to the papers at Bellefonte and Millheim, but the editors were on the side of the ‘lumber industry,’ and the waste paper baskets alone received her arguments.

“With such a force it did not take long to turn the Meadows from a jungle to a staked plain, where only dead or deformed trees reared their heads out of the ruin. The sunlight pouring into spaces where it had

not shone for centuries, diminished the water-courses, dried up many of the morasses or quicksands, and changed the soil so that the rare plants would not grow. On top of it all, a hot spring fire swept over the 'slashings,' and had it not been for the 'skunk cabbages' which came out afterwards, the region would have looked as barren as the Sahara. The recently abandoned lumbermen's shanties were burnt, and the settlers had to fight night and day to save their buildings.

"Right on the trail of the holocaust came young Irvin Bamford, collecting fossils, reptiles and plants for the University of Pennsylvania. As quicksilver is attracted to its like, he found a boarding place with Merrill Speary, who lived the next house beyond the Nolls. Merrill was trying to farm and raise pigs, and while his wife afforded good accommodations he could not spare the time to show the youthful scientist around the mountains. He gravitated to Zacharias Noll, who had the time, and liked an excuse to be in the woods, and naturally enough this led to his meeting the fair Elizabeth.

“Although Zacharias did the actual ‘path-finding’ it was always Elizabeth who planned the excursions. After a few days Bamford discovered things weren’t as expected—the lumbermen and fires had changed the topography of the Meadows, the rare trees, plants and flowers were no more, even the reptiles had retired to more congenial surroundings. Furthermore, he found in Elizabeth an intelligent acquaintance; she could describe the Meadows as they were before the despoilers laid them waste, and knew lots of interesting things besides. Each day he shortened his explorations in order to spend more time with the attractive woman.

“But he must accomplish his mission; if he could not find his specimens here, he must look elsewhere. ‘I did want to find a good example of the pitcher-plant; I was led to believe it grew plentifully here, but the fires have driven it out, and I really don’t know where else I can get a first-class one.’ That seemed to be his chief lament as the time drew near for him to go. When he said good-bye at the gate he told Elizabeth how she had

made his stay the happiest incident of his life. She looked down at her two eldest youngsters tugging on her skirts, and blushed the color of a pitcher-plant. Then she faltered, '*I do like you, but don't tell a soul,*' and turned away. 'If I don't find what I want, I'll be back again in a week,' he called to her as with canvas knapsack and butterfly net he was lost to sight in the bend of the road behind the pepperidge trees.

"Elizabeth felt his absence instantly—he was so different from any man she had ever met before; he knew so much, yet was so simple and kindly. She tried to remember every feature of his face, his lithe, slender figure, his quiet, earnest voice. It kept her awake the first night, and she recited to herself again and again 'he has gray eyes, an arched nose, a clean-cut mouth, a clear complexion, hair that is more red than chestnut, a straight figure, a graceful walk, hands that take in any situation.'

"This was the first time she had ever tried to retain the details of a man's appearance; previously they had either seemed handsome

or ugly, and there her penetration ended. She didn't feel well the next morning, and that night was equally disquieting, for with some paradox of fate, the features of the man who had impressed her most seemed most difficult to recall.

"Her mother, the widow Phoenix, lived on the other side of the Meadows, so she decided to have a little change and spend a day with her. Mrs. Speary said she would mind the children. The day was fine, and nothing can be finer than a clear June day in the mountains. She left the house after breakfast was over. Zacharias accompanied her as far as the stream; maybe that was why she noticed so little on the way. After she parted from him, she hurried along the soft path, looking neither to the right nor the left, probably because his influence was still upon her. Her mother was not in a very sympathetic mood; Elizabeth seemed abstracted and queer, and by three o'clock relations were so strained that the young woman started for home abruptly.

“Everything seemed so beautiful on the way back. It took quite an imagination for this, with nothing but dead trees, charred logs and stumps, mayweed and wild ginger to fill the dreary waste. When she reached the stream Zacharias lay asleep under a spreading white pine that had somehow escaped the fire; she hated to disturb him. A short distance away in the brook floated his rod and line—it would have drifted off with the current had it not been stopped by a rotting log which lay in midstream. As she crossed the brook she caught herself repeating ‘his eyes are gray, his lashes are not quite black, but have a touch of color to them, his eyebrows are chestnut color, his hair has more red than chestnut in it.’”

“She felt the color mounting to her cheeks. What if Bamford knew she could be so silly—besides she could never be anything to him; she was a married woman. He liked her because she was well posted, and knew the woods; that was all. She braced herself and began whistling something, an improvisation between a Methodist hymn and ‘Listen to the

Mocking Bird.' 'Isn't it fine,' she thought, 'to live in this beautiful world, and meet people who take an interest in you, and help you to make it more beautiful.'

"As she glanced about her, something ruby-red shone out conspicuously from another oasis, so dark and soggy that it had escaped the fire. She looked more carefully—it was as Thoreau described it, like 'a great dull red rose.' She pushed aside ferns and some low bushes and peered into the gloomy morass. There were the leaves, 'pitcher-shaped, broadly winged, hooded,' like green bronze urns. All these supported, and were crowned by the large, distinctive flowers, which nodded and drooped their heads as she had done when Irvin Bamford had told her she had made his stay the happiest incident of his life. 'Oh, if only Irvin were here to see this,' she called out with enthusiasm.

"An audible murmur swept through the trees; it became louder as it grew near; every tree, living and dead, took up the refrain, the chorus of her happiness in the June breeze. As she started ahead, a treefrog took up his

thrilling song in the topmost branches of an old white-oak. She could hear him a long ways—the reverberating tones of ‘generro, generro, generro, err-err-err-generro, generro, generr-oh!’ As the strains died away she came upon three wood-robins singing their song, which sounded like the ringing of tiny, tuneful silver bells, with never a faltering note struck by the feathered bell-ringers.

“As she neared the gate, her oldest child, little Dorothy, who had been sitting on the steps, ran towards her. ‘Oh, mama,’ she shouted, ‘there’s a letter inside for you. Mr. Speary was to the post-office and brought it with him.’

“Elizabeth’s heart stood still; she dared not hope it was from Bamford, but who else could be writing her? She pretended to be unconcerned, and walked leisurely into the house. On the dresser lay the letter. She had seen the young scientist writing reports; it was his handwriting. ‘Mrs. Elizabeth Noll. My dear friend,’ it began. ‘If all goes well I will arrive at Mr. Speary’s place early

Thursday morning. I will be very glad to see you once more. I have thought of you very often. I have much to tell you, but will wait until I see you. Faithfully yours, I. Bamford.' 'He must like me a lot,' she thought, 'else why should he write me? It wasn't necessary. Most probably he wanted to say more but was afraid. Thursday is tomorrow!'

"Just as she was reading it for the sixth time Zacharias came in the back door and confronted her. Consciously she stuffed the letter into her belt, but as he made no remark, she offered no explanation. When supper was over, Zacharias went off to see a neighbor about some trout flies, and left his wife sitting on the front steps. The sky was a rich electric blue, and over the uncouth silhouette of the Meadows the first, fragile phase of the new moon was rising. 'Irvin will be here in the morning. I am so glad; what can I do to show my happiness?' So meditated the beautiful Elizabeth. And then a voice within her spoke aloud, 'Get him that wonderful pitcher-plant.'

“She got up, and going indoors, made sure the children were asleep. Then she lit a lantern and walked to the gate, and out along the road to the meadows. Every minute or so she would look up at the new moon, so like the fragile figure of an aerial dancing girl. Little crickets were chirping in the grass beside the path. From the woodlands came that clean, cool odor of the summer night, which even the recent fires had not entirely destroyed. She knew just where to find the pitcher-plant; it was in an ‘oasis,’ and the giant white-oak with an elbow like a pugilist showing off his muscle was an additional landmark.

“When she neared the spot a moonbeam was resting on the elbow of the oak, like a spangled scarf thrown across a balustrade. She held her lantern aloft, but she scarcely needed it, the night was so bright. The plant grew too far in the morass to reach it from where she stood on the path, so she stepped bravely into the gloom. All went well for a few steps, then she began to sink. But her purpose being a high one, she did not notice

her difficulties. She was sunk in mud up to the calves of her pretty legs when she began prying up the coveted pitcher-plant by the roots. It seemed hard to dislodge, and she was sinking deeper. She was in to her waist when she got it loose. She held it aloft, and smiled, and the moonbeam zig-zagged to her, and seemed to applaud her for her endeavor.

“ ‘What a surprise it will be for Irvin. I’ll have it for him in water, roots and all, when he comes in after breakfast tomorrow.’ She was admiring the plant, and stroking the rich, red, moon-bathed flowers, in an ecstasy of happiness, when she felt a pressure under her arms. She looked about in alarm; she was up to her armpits in the horrid mud. It had closed on her quickly, imperceptibly.

“She tried to struggle, but it only made a suction below, and she had but time to call out ‘Irvin, Irvin, you must see the pitcher-plant!’ as she disappeared from sight. Zacharias was out all night, and in the morning came to the house about the same time as Irvin. Both missed Elizabeth. Zacha-

rias said, 'I saw her reading a letter; she looked sheepish; she's run away.'

"Irvin looked at him angrily and said, 'She has not run away; she was too noble a woman for that; she's met with some accident, or foul play.' Pretty soon Merrill Speary joined them. 'That letter was post-marked Ox-Bow; I wonder who she knew there?' Both men shook their heads. Irvin Bamford knew, but he was not going to complicate matters. 'She may have gotten lost in the Meadows,' he suggested.

"About that time I came along, and the four of us turned into the path leading to the one-time jungle. We found footprints, and followed them; they were Elizabeth's sure enough; they led to the great white-oak with the elbow. There they became confused and we could trace them no longer. Back in the morass the surface had an unsteady look. Bamford became suspicious and stamped his foot and the whole quagmire shook for fifty paces in every direction. 'That girl is buried in the quicksand,' he declared.

"I agreed with him, but Zacharias and Speary shook their heads. 'She's gone and met someone here and eloped,' they chorused. Bamford and I went back for shovels, and tried as best we could without being engulfed ourselves, to fathom the mystery of the dark, deep deposit. We returned at sunset without a clew, except that on the surface we found an uprooted and badly wilted pitcher-plant. We could only say that the earth had swallowed her. Most of the natives differed with us, and still insist laconically that 'Elizabeth Noll ran off.'

"Bamford returned to Philadelphia, where they say he is now a full-fledged professor, but whether he forgot Elizabeth in his work, or his work was successful because of her, he will have to tell you himself.

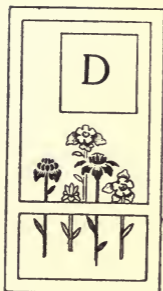
"Very often when I cross the Meadows on the first night of a new moon, I see a moon-beam playing through the elbow of the old white-oak. It does seem strange it should always be in the one place, and if you look at it long enough you will see it has not the contour of a moonray, but resembles a slender.

girlish form. I have seen its eyes looking at me, but I am not afraid, as I know it is Elizabeth, hoping doubtless to send a message to her lover. I have waited and I have watched, but never a word has she spoken thus far. And what few folks that are left about the Meadows, tell the same story—but.”

At this moment the heavy-set brakeman threw open the car door and shouted, “Fair Grounds, Fair Grounds, all out for the Fair Grounds!” There was a scramble and a shuffle, and I lost sight of my interesting companion in the rush. Late in the afternoon, when I was saddling my horse, Lew Hutt, for the final heat of the running race, I saw him for a minute near the stables. “Come to see me, friend; you know where to find me,” he called, cheerily, and this I must do soon, for three years have elapsed, and learn if the shadow of Elizabeth has broken its silence.

XXVI.

MEETING HERMIONIE



URING my long illness, I dreamed oftener than usual but always about Hermionie. Sometimes my eyes would be filled with tears when I awoke, so vivid were the impressions of renewed association with one who had meant so much to me ten years ago.

When in good health, I dreamed very seldom, but these occasional dreams seemed so realistic that had Hermionie lived in the same house with me I could not have seen her more distinctly. Why she was the sole object of my dreams, when my life was filled with changing and strange incidents, remained a mystery with me. Her image had literally "camped out" in my soul, I thought, and, while there, no other impressions could crystallize.

To amuse myself in the tedious hours while I lay on my bed of sickness, I imagined she would come in the door and visit me; I would select an hour when a train arrived from the direction of her home, and then wait expectantly for her appearance. But the "expected unexpected" never comes true, and after weeks of waiting I was doomed to disappointment. It was silly to have felt that way, as I did not know she was aware of my illness, and even so, she was happily married and would have other things to do than to travel a hundred and fifty miles to see a former lover.

As I began to improve my dreams grew less frequent, which was a great relief to me, as they filled me with sadness, and awoke memories that best belonged in the dead and buried past. I was even ceasing to watch the door for her coming—I was so nearly well, that I laughed to myself at the way I had spent so many hours imagining her coming, how she would look, and what she would say. Then one night I dreamed of her in

such a way that I was loath to believe it had been a dream.

I had fallen 'asleep early that night, looking, as was my wont, at the reflection of the lamp-light on the ceiling, which seemed to have in its shadowy outlines the features of Hermionie's face. Therefore, my last conscious thoughts being of her, I should have been satisfied it was only a dream, but still I hated to allow myself to be convinced. If it was a dream, then I must have been sleeping when the door opened, and, instinctively, as if awake, I rose up on my pillow.

By the yellow lamp-glow I saw standing at the foot of the bed the familiar outlines of Hermionie. She looked just as she did when I saw her last, four years before, and when our eyes met, she nodded and smiled. In my other dreams of her, while we had carried on conversations, yet I could not be sure that I actually heard the tones of her voice. But this time I surely did—she had an intonation different from any person I ever met—and this night she spoke

clearly and with every little mannerism I used to know so well.

“Herndon,” she said, “I am sorry you’ve been so sick, but you will soon be ever so much better. I have come a great many times to see you; it has been an awful effort to do so and always leaves me ill the next day. I cannot come to see you this way again for a long time, but in the course of a month you are going to take a journey into the western part of the state. I will meet you at the station at Hydesburg; we both change cars there; we will be together for four hours, and it will do us both more good than to meet as unfettered spirits in the world of sleep.”

I told her I should be delighted to take the journey and asked for further particulars. “Your train will reach Hydesburg at 8.00 o’clock on the morning of February 4th, and I will arrive there ten minutes earlier. At noon your train leaves, and I take one for the east at 12.09. It will be impossible for you to disappoint me. Destiny, which never explains its reasons, has so ordered it, and, although there will be apparently no outcome

to our meeting, it will be to the great spiritual benefit of us both."

I remember that whether it was all a dream or not I wanted more evidence, and asked her to come nearer, which she did. I reached up and caught her in my arms and kissed her long and lovingly on those thin, curved lips, which had seemed so inscrutable, so mocking, so adorable, in the days gone by. I held her hand—it felt like flesh and blood; it was not the hand of the ghosts or disembodied shades we read about.

If I was asleep when she came in, and in the course of our conversation, I surely was wide awake now. I was sitting up in bed, noticing every detail of the room, so as to make sure I was not dreaming. Still, when daylight appeared, I knew there had been no actual visitor, my senses were too normal for that, but still I had the haunting knowledge that the spiritual essence of Hermionie had been with me. I had not forgotten the feeling of contentment and happiness that possessed me for hours after having visited her, no matter for how short a time, in the past.

I felt exactly the same now. It was the spiritual being that had exhilarated me before; it was that essence in purer form that created the sensation now.

I determined to take the trip if able, on February 4th. It worked in very nicely with a necessary business trip, but I kept incessantly wondering whether Hermionie had the power to compel her spirit to visit me, or whether she was in ignorance of these seances. I was sure she was a devoted wife, hence concluded she knew nothing of it.

The dream, or whatever it was, soon came true in one particular. From the night she told me of our proposed meeting, until I started on the trip, my sleep was absolutely dreamless. As time rolled on I became more matter of fact; I figured out there was about one chance in a million in the big state of Pennsylvania that I could meet her on a certain date, at a certain hour, in such an out of the way place as Hydesburg. It seemed preposterous for me to contemplate such an excursion, but I was urged on by an impulse

within me that was stronger than I could resist.

Rather than put myself down as superstitious or credulous, I ascribed my love of the picturesque and the unusual as the motive for this odd pilgrimage. From the beginning I had always associated Hermionie with railway trains. I met her on one bound for Pittsburg on a visit, and the last time I had seen her, a couple of years after our love story had ended, was also on a train headed for the Smoky City, and exactly six years to the day from the date when we first met. "Life is a circle," I remarked at the time—but were I saying it now would be quoting the words of Richard Le Galienne, who said, "If we push far enough into the future we are sure to encounter the past."

But that was the last time I had actually seen her, granting that my night-time experiences were purely dreamland phantasms. In daytime I was busy, and seldom thought of her; at night I had other friends, and were it not for my dreams could have classed her as a person who had completely dropped out

of my life. And why not? She was married, had doubtless forgotten me, and I was living by that rule of George Moore's, "The past must be treated as dead flesh; we must cut ourselves off from it that we may live."

I seemed to improve rapidly after my nocturnal visitation, and when the weeks rolled around, and it was time to depart on my very prosaic business—and very bizarre pleasure trip—I was feeling almost as well as had been before I was stricken. Before starting I was determined to test my luck, that is, do some audacious thing, and if it turned out in my favor, it would show that fortune favored me. Everything I tried for several days turned out satisfactorily, and I could not but feel that I was going to meet Hermionie, even though I had a percentage of a million chances to one against.

I was living in the outskirts of Reading at the time, and on the appointed day ordered a cab to take me to the station. The time arrived for the cab to put in an appearance, but it was not to be seen. I telephoned to the barn, but was told it had started. By that

time it looked as if I would miss the train, so lugging my heavy suit-case I started on foot for the nearest trolley car, nearly half a mile away. Just as I reached the tracks I met the cab; the driver said he had gone to a wrong address, and as I saw no car in sight, started for the station in the slow-going conveyance.

The driver, who was a good fellow, did his best, but the roads were rough and piled with snow, and the result was that we saw the train pulling out for Harrisburg as we drove up the steep hill to the depot. This looked as if my trip, at least the personal side of it, was to be a failure, but as, on account of business matters, I had to go in that direction anyway, I boarded the next train, which started several hours later. Just as I expected, I missed connections at Harrisburg, and had to lie over until the next morning.

At eight o'clock, the hour when I expected to be meeting Hermionie at Hydesburg, I was travelling through the narrows near Lewistown on a local. It was unfortunate to devote so much time to chasing a phan-

tom, and I laughed to myself for imagining that such a thing as meeting her could ever have happened. The "luck" that I had tried out a few days before was evidently a "sweetener" from the hand of Destiny, to compensate me for disappointments ahead. I had been treated that way before, and why should I have thought it could be different this time?

I had two changes of cars, and the consequent delays, before I reached Hydesburg. I was feeling pretty impatient, and, try as I might, could not interest myself in the bleak landscape, with the snow-covered fields, and the farm houses seemingly buried in the drifts. On the ponds the skaters looked like black flies on the icing of cakes. Even the mountains had a forbidding look, and never, it appeared to me, did the trees seem so black, and dead and listless. The car smelt strongly of mint candy and sugar cookies, as it was filled with mothers and children, but even these did not appeal to me today.

I scarcely took notice as the train crept around the horseshoe curve, where twenty carloads of animals and circus performers

had gone to their death some seventeen years back. Even when the train stopped at Sandy Ridge, where I had seen a pretty blonde girl get out, the first time I had travelled on the T. & C., I evinced no interest; all I could think of was my little romance of Destiny.

The afternoon train was late on account of the storms, and it was 5 o'clock in the afternoon instead of 8 o'clock in the morning when I found myself alone on the station platform at Hydesburg. I looked at the sombre drab-colored building, with the telegrapher working inside the screened window, the snow drifts on the opposite side of the track, the lifeless trees, the mountainous landscape almost the color of the approaching dusk. I was at Hydesburg, with over four hours to wait, and no signs of Hermionie.

Then, out of curiosity, I opened the door of the ladies' waiting room. In a dark corner, back of the huge whitewashed stove, sat a woman—it was Hermionie. She got up quickly and came towards me; we shook hands as if everything had been prearranged,

and I took pains to notice that there was no trace of surprise in her voice. She looked just as she had when I saw her last, only the new style of tight-fitting skirts seemed to harmonize more completely with the long, slim lines of her erect figure than anything she wore in the old days. She had on a three-cornered dark blue velvet hat, over which a net veil was thrown, and her long coat and gown were of dark material. Her eyes were as preternaturally black as of yore, as was her hair, which was drawn tightly back and tied in a small knot at her neck. The arched nose which turned up just a trifle at the end, and the thin, never motionless lips, and the clear pale complexion, all brought back a revulsion of feeling that was hard for me to disguise.

While the first greeting was devoid of any surprise, I gradually began to realize the strangeness of the situation. "How did you happen here?" I made bold to ask. "I'm on my way to visit my sister-in-law in Milroy, but my train is late. I don't know what the trouble is, and I got stranded here. I was

going on the early train this morning, but I found I would have to lie over here for several hours, and I didn't like the thought of that, so I came by the later train with no better results."

I looked at her in amazement. "Why, I was coming here on the early morning train from Tyrone it was due here about 8 o'clock, but I missed my train in Reading last evening, which held me back half a day."

"Where are you going, Herndon?" she asked; "I know you are great at travelling, but isn't this a trifle out of your line?"

I saw that the time had come to reveal the whole story. We went out on the platform and began walking up and down. "I had some business in Clearfield," I began, "but, of course, I could have gotten there direct from Reading by the P. & R. and the Beech Creek, but I came this way to meet *you*."

"Well," said Hermionie, with one of her old-time perplexing smiles, "that wasn't why I stayed over until the later train. I had a dream that I would meet you here at 8 o'clock this morning, and, as I am happy with Jim, I

saw no reason of doing so. I was just superstitious enough to fear you would be here, so I waited over a train, but you found me anyhow."

"Well, Hermionie," I said, "it is foolish for us to meet, but I had a dream telling me I would meet you here at 8 o'clock this morning, and even though I came this way, I sort of felt relieved that I would not see you because I got here so many hours late."

"Do you often dream about me?" she inquired.

"Generally speaking, no, but I have been sick lately, and I dreamed a good deal." Then I went on to tell her about the vision I had had which led to this singular adventure.

"It's been the same with me," said Hermionie; "ever since I have been married, I've dreamed about you; that I took long journeys to see you. I hated to do it, as I did not want even my soul to be untrue to Jim. I always felt wretchedly tired the next morning, but how can we make ourselves stop dreaming, and I disliked consulting medical advice or even telling my husband. Of late I dreamed

often you were ill. Over a month ago I had a most peculiar dream; I should say it was more of a vision. In it I seemed to be fully awake, which was a new sensation, and to get out of bed and dress and climb out through the window. There a gust of wind caught me, and I was wafted, as easily as if in an airship, over the treetops, mountains and clouds, close by the full moon—”

Here I interrupted her. “It must have been the same night I dreamed you came to me, which caused this trip; it was the first night of the full moon in December.”

“Well,” she continued; “I alighted on a little portico in front of an open window, and had not the will power to resist going in. There I found you lying in bed, but not asleep, and by the light of a lamp on the centre table I saw that you were looking badly, but better than I expected. In the course of our conversation I told you that I expected to be at Hydesburg on the morning of February 4, and would meet you there. That is all I remember. Then I left you, and at daybreak Jim found me sitting on the side of the bed

fully dressed. We concluded that I had been having a nightmare and especially as I had a terrible headache. Jim worried for days about it. But secretly I was more concerned than he; I knew that my experience had been a most peculiar one, and I wondered if, in reality, you were ill. You meant nothing to me, yet for old time's sake, I felt sorry if anything was wrong. I inquired around, but no one had heard anything of you, not even the druggist's clerk, who said he used to go hunting with you. I did not write, as I might find that you were 'never in better health,' as the story goes, and you would think I was trying to reopen our old romance. Of course, I ought not to have come to Hydesburg today; that would have been the simplest way to end the incident; but everyone, men as well as women, are a trifle curious, and I wanted to see what would happen. You can put your own construction on it."

Just as she finished her story I peered in at the telegrapher plugging away behind the grated window. He was looking in wonderment at us walking up and down the platform

in the cold night air. After verifying the time of the departure of our trains we went to the Eagle hotel, back to the station, and had supper. Then we sat the rest of the evening by the stove in the hotel parlor, talking over old times, and the stubborn Destiny that decreed we should meet this day. At nine-thirty, when I saw her on the south-bound train, it was all as much of a mystery to us as ever. Perhaps I am happier at delving back into the past and seeing her again; perhaps she is; yet neither of us would confess that in the intervening years we had repined much for each other's presence. But since then I have ceased dreaming of Herminie.

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